



BILL SMILEY

Between Bites, the Apple was Sweet

Looking back on 1971, I find it contains the year's usual melange of the good and evil, the sweet and bitter, the lolly worm within the luscious apple.

An old friend, Don McCuaig of Renfrew, won the Best Newspaper award among Canada's weeklies. I've thought for several years that he had the best weekly in the country (sorry about that, all you other chaps who turn out first-class weeklies), but never got around to telling him.

On the other side of the fence, I read an editorial in the Bowmanville Statesman, an old, established, many times winner of prizes, written from his hospital bed by another old friend, John James. This shook me a bit.

Haven't seen Don McCuaig for some years, but we have an old pact. He was in the army and one day was being slightly harassed by Hun 88's, a fearsome gun, if ever there was. A flight of Typhoons came over and silenced the Jerry guns. We met at a newspaper convention and he promised me he'd buy me the biggest and best dinner I could eat every time we got together, because I'd been a Typhoon pilot. And he still sends an annual invitation to come trout fishing in the Ottawa Valley, the natal place of many great men, like us.

Last time I saw John James, he and two gigantic sons were whaling golf balls at a weeklies tournament, while I puddled along with my usual slices, hooks and various blunders of the links. Get well, John, and hit them a mile.

Here's a clipping and note from Tommy Lee, former weekly editor and now PR man with Royal Trust. He, too, was a pilot. The clipping is about the big airer reunion in Winnipeg and the note chides me for not hobnobbing with the mob. I wanted to go, Tommy, but my wife wouldn't let me. She didn't want me shipped home in a casket.

And here's a note from Walter Koyanagi of the Taber, Alta. Times, giving me hell for using the term "Japs" in a column. He claims that the word "Jap" is derogatory and objectionable. To me, it's just an abbreviation. He also doubts if I would call a German or Italian other than such in public print. See above, Walter. I wouldn't give a diddle if somebody called Canadians "Cans". In fact, it might be suitable. Many of us have the figure and the mental resilience of a can.

Here's a huge newspaper from

Oronoto, N.B., in which I learn that a dear old friend, George Cadogan, who actually got this column going, can't resist the smell of printers' ink and has got back into the scramble of running a weekly, after a letter swearing that he was going to take it easy and spend the winter in Spain. Take it easy, George. Oronoto is a long way from Majorca. But good luck, Lord Thomson of the Maritimes.

And the bitter. News that a close friend of my wife's, a dedicated Catholic nun, and one of the most vibrant, cheery personalities one could meet, is seriously ill. Young in age and spirit, she resists my firm conviction that God does not "see the little sparrow fall". Bless her.

Here's a buoyant letter from my Uncle Ivan, who has suffered the tragic loss of a brilliant son, and the death of his wife in a stupid car accident, is 70, and is off to Florida, and thinks he'll drive this time.

And just before Christmas, friends of ours lost a little six-year-old angel of a girl, who was pitilessly smashed to rags in a stupid, unnecessary car accident, on her way home from school.

And so it goes: the bitter and the sweet, the good and bad, the joyous and the tragic. Life; and it's the only one we have.

I don't want to spoil a mood, or appear frivolous, but we had the whole thing distilled in our Christmas vacation with two cats.

We have a fat, neutered lady called Pip, bequeathed to us by Kim when she left home.

Well, Pip has established the fact that she is queen of her own domain. She chases everything from squirrels to butterflies to spiders out of her backyard in summer, and deigns to spend the winter eating and sleeping.

Home from college comes Kim, sneaking in a box with airholes, the rauciest, rauciest young tomcat you've ever laid eyes on. For the first few days, Pip tried to lay down the law as to whom the house belonged to. The pre-Christmas air was rent with howls and screams as they clashed. I'd put one in the cellar, the other in the back johnnie.

Finally, fat old Pip got too peoped to participate. After a few days, they decided to co-exist, and now spend their time chasing each other up the drapes and over the upholstery.

Maybe there's a message here, somewhere. The good and the bad, the bitter and the sweet, are part of life, and we can either accept it or run away from it.

Limehouse

Teachers Hosts for School Staff Parties

Miss Linda Linham, a teacher at Glen Williams public school, was hostess for the Christmas dinner for fellow staff members at her home last Wednesday.

Mrs. Robson was hostess for the Limehouse public school staff party at her 6th Line home a week before Christmas.

We enjoyed a call by Rhonda and Lori Clow and Anna Marie and Adrian Swinkies, who were out carolling on behalf of the Georgetown & District Memorial hospital on Thursday evening.

The pleasant Christmas Eve service at Limehouse Presbyterian Church was quite well attended. Ted Brown, Jr. and William Karn conducted the service with Mr. Robert Hyde as speaker. The choir led in carols and sang three anthems. Linda Linham read "What is Christmas?" Mrs. Jack Roughley and Mrs. Bert Benton presided at the organ and piano.

Dr. J. C. Hay, professor at Knox College, preached on Sunday at Limehouse Presbyterian Church. The next three services will be at 9:30 a.m. with ministers preaching for calls.

Visitors at Christmas included: Mrs. S. Smith, Mrs. Les Hutchinson and Jack Hutchinson, Weston, Mrs. Hutchinson, Sr. of Toronto and Mr. and Mrs. William Henry and Tanya of Midland with the A. C. Pattersons, Mrs. Henry and daughter remaining for the week.

Miss Pearl Scott of Georgetown with Mrs. Mitchell and the Sanfords.

Mr. A. Marshall and Miss Eileen Marshall of Toronto, and Mrs. Osburn on Christmas day, and Mr. and Mrs. Russell Ross and Mr. and Mrs. Wayne Rose and family of New Toronto with the 4th Line Lawsons.

Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Booth entertained all their family, excepting one daughter in Vancouver, who with her husband and infant daughter, flew to Holland to be with his parents.

Mrs. and Mrs. Nunes Vas of Amsterdam, Holland, are spending a month with son Frank, his wife and family, 6th Line.

Miss F. Anthony of Shakespeare with the Fox and Brook families.

Mr. and Mrs. R. Mitchell with the John Michies.

Those away at Christmas: The Paton family with relatives at Fergus.

The Benton families with the

Greenlees at Campbellville.

Mr. and Mrs. Bantish with their parents in Toronto and Unionville.

The Roughleys with the Reverend Mackenzies in Acton.

Mr. and Mrs. Bert Benton and John with her parents at Meaford on Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. William Karn with his parents at London on Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. John Michie and family with the George Michies at Kleinberg on Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Jack Crichton and Jackie with Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Haines at Glen Williams.

The Walter Linhams at a family gathering at the Frank Longsirets near Orton.

The George Morrisons with relatives at Richmond, Quebec, for the holidays.

The Fred Piehls with her sister, Miss Noble in Hamilton. New Year's visitors.

The Thomas Haines and Wayne Haines with the Crichtons.

Mr. Torne Noble and Mr. Jim Piehl of Gatchell, with the Fred Piehls.

Mr. and Mrs. Wilfrid Greenlees, the Bill Elliotts and the Jack Woods, all of Campbellville, with the Bentons.

Those away included:

The Walter Linhams at the Willard Sandersons on Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. A. C. Patterson with Mr. and Mrs. Henry in Acton.

Mrs. Mitchell and the Sanfords with Mr. and Mrs. P. Kenny, Acton.

Mrs. Kirkpatrick with the Calvin MacDonalDs, Elmwood, over the holidays.

—Mrs. A. W. Benton.

Rain and slushy roads bring many additional hazards to drivers. One of the city hazards, pointed out by the Ontario Safety League, is the fact that, at the very time when driver vision is most limited by blurred windshields, pedestrians are liable to make hasty mistakes to avoid getting wet or splattered while crossing streets.

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