

# SUGAR AND SPICE

by Bill Smiley



## A Red-Eyed Teacher

Ever been on shift work? Most nurses have. Many industrial workers have. Farmers, executives, merchants, office workers — and until recently, teachers — have not had that delightful experience.

First time I ran into it was on my first job, when I was 17 — back in the middle ages, sometimes known as the Dirty Thirties. I have been a stalwart champion of the working man ever since.

It was on a steamboat on the Great Lakes. Seven days a week. For a dollar a day.

I worked the graveyard shift. Except that in those days it was a shift and a half, from midnight to noon. And it seemed to be rolling a little every midnight. Just enough to make you queasy.

Sick at heart, sick at stomach, we groggily made our way to the galley, about 11.30 p.m., for "breakfast."

The night cook was a jolly Oriental gentleman called Sing. He couldn't sing. And he couldn't cook, either. But his heart was in the right place. He knew we needed sustenance for the 12 hours ahead.

Chuckling merrily, he'd pile our plates with greasy eggs, greasy ham, greasy fried potatoes. Sometimes, for a change, there'd be greasy sausages and bread fried in grease.

Even a 17-year-old stomach, the human organ that most closely resembles a cement-mixer, couldn't take it. We used to push the greasy gob around the plate, and settle for some greasy coffee.

But the clincher, the thing that really made our stomachs heave, that made us rush from the gallery to our jobs of cleaning out the lavatories, was the dessert.

Triumphantly, Sing would sing out, "You like nice Boston Cream Pie? I got." Now, as you probably know, Boston Cream Pie is a rich, nauseous concoction of custard topped with cream. Almost 30 years later, I still gag when I see it on a menu.

As you may have gathered, I didn't like shift work then. And

it hasn't improved much during the intervening years.

This year, at our school, we're on a double shift. A combination of post-war baby boom and bureaucratic red tape have produced a situation in which the populations of two entire schools, some 2,000 students, are sharing a building intended for half that number.

The school board had two alternatives. They could have each student hold another student on his or her knee all day, or they could run two shifts.

They favored the former, because it would save on teachers, lighting and books. But some parents were pretty annoyed at the idea of their 88-pound daughters holding a 200-pound football player in their laps all day. So the school board fearlessly compromised, and voted for the shift system.

And that's why your faithful reporter lurches out of bed at 6.15, wildly groping for the alarm clock, has a coffee break, if there is one, at 9 a.m., and eats lunch about 10.30 in the morning.

In theory, it's wonderful. Teachers have all afternoon to sleep, golf, curl or hunt, and the evening to prepare lessons. Good for the students, too. They have their homework all done by dinner time, and can watch TV or wash their hair, or go to the poolroom. All we have to do is get to bed a couple of hours earlier than in the good old days.

In practice, it's horrible. Wives persecute husbands in the afternoon with shopping, scrubbing, repairing, nagging. If you sleep in the afternoon, you lie stark, staring, insomniacal, at night. If you work or play, you fall asleep in the middle of dinner, baked potato half chewed.

Nobody goes to bed any earlier than they ever did. And what we wind up with is a pedantry of red-eyed teachers, frayed at the edges, facing a gaggle of yawning teenagers, some of whom were up at 5 a.m. to catch the school bus, every morning at 7.45.

### C.W.L. MEETING NEXT SUNDAY

The Catholic Women's League will hold their monthly meeting on Sunday, February 13th in St. Martin's Church Hall at 8.15 p.m., preceded by recitation of the Rosary. Members are asked to bring in Canada Packer labels and old Christmas Cards.

Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Tait of Fort William visited with their sister, Mr. and Mrs. H. Duriez last week.

Scotty Hamilton's Legion zone winners took his rink to the district playoffs in the Lakehead last weekend and, though they did not win, report a grueling three-game schedule with two games lost on the last rock. With Scotty were Jim Clancy, Harry Gusul and Cliff Woods.

We had another letter this week from Mr. Morris Cressner of Plymouth, Indiana and he enclosed a color photo of his office with Christmas decorations and about two inches of snow showing. He writes —

"Enjoyed your Xmas paper with all the pictures, also the last issue with the aerial view of your town and the Mill. ... We did not have much snow but yesterday (Jan. 30), it was 16 below zero. I have wondered how cold it gets at Terrace Bay.

The ice carnival sounds very interesting and I showed your paper to several men who go fishing several times a year near Wawa and they thought seriously about driving to Terrace Bay but then they thought the roads might be too bad.

The St. Denis family will like Moosehart as it is a wonderful place. The children are well taken care of and also the older members of the family...."

Regarding our weather, Mr. Cressner, we do at times get down below 16 degrees during our winter. During this past weekend it has been around 30 degrees above. Today we have a heavy wet snow falling to add to the approx. four to five feet which lies on the flats and backyards in town. Our streets and thoroughfares are kept clear by an efficient crew and big snow plough. Please tell your friends that we think the highway from Wawa to Terrace Bay is excellent. Better than the part from the Sault to Wawa.

We hope you like our Carnival pictures and you will see the girl chosen to be Snow Queen — also our King Carnival, who grew that beard just for the contest.

### ROSSPORT NEWS

The 500 Card Club met at Mrs. Angela Testori's home Tuesday evening. Prizes were won by Mrs. Foreman, Mrs. Hubelit and Mrs. Ibey. Lunch was served by the hostess.

Mrs. A. McGregor of Sudbury is here to be with her mother, Mrs. P. Sully, who is in Terrace Bay Hospital.

Brian, Albert and Donnie Ray of Middleton spent the weekend with Mr. and Mrs. W. Hubelit.

Mr. and Mrs. Everett Johnson of Port Wing, Wisconsin were here on the weekend looking for herring for their smoked fish plant.

CURLING NEWS (Continued from page 2)  
This event should produce some exciting curling.

### STORK CLUB

Mr. and Mrs. Albert D. Costa of Schreiber are happy to announce the birth of a baby boy on February 7th at Terrace Bay Private Hospital.