

SUGAR AND SPICE

by Bill Smiley



Oh, these college boys!

May you never have a child who is going to college. And if you have one, please accept my heart-felt condolences.

Ours is a male. I don't know what college girls are like (any more, he said sadly) but I suspect they're just as much of a cross to bear, for their parents.

I had to get out of bed this morning at 6 a.m. to get rid of ours, but it was worth it. After he'd climbed on the bus, in a flurry of last-minute kisses and admonitions, I must confess to a distinct lifting of the spirits.

It isn't that we don't love our son. We have the deepest affection for him, and show it in the usual stupid ways. That is, we worry about his welfare; we puff with pride when he does something well; we spend hours trying to figure out what is best for him; and we put up with murder from him. Typical, normal parents.

And it isn't that he's a delinquent. Although there are times when I've been tempted to look up the exact definition of that word.

No, he's really quite a decent, average college student. He's generous, idealistic and perfectly good-natured, if you don't cross him. He is reasonably polite — to everyone but his family. He is thoughtful with old people and children — until they bore him. He can work steadily for 12 hours at something he likes doing. Like sleeping. He would give you the shirt off his back; and is completely self-centred. He can dance all night, but collapses when the lawn is half-mowed.

You'd wonder why we'd have this sense of relief when he leaves. There's lots of fun when he's around the house. He plays guitar and sings, plays piano

well, plays mouth organ, is full of beans.

When he's around the house. Ay, there's the rub. He has just spent three weeks "at home." This included a couple of days visiting his grandparents, a week off hitch-hiking to Montreal and back, three days with a friend at the latter's cottage, and a day with another friend in the city.

But it's been nice to have him home.

And he's been a great help to me. He mowed one-third of the lawn one day; dug four feet of a 60-foot border another, and washed the car another (at the coin-wash).

I'm not trying to imply that the boy is bone-lazy. It's just that he's too busy. When he is home, he usually gets to bed an hour, sometimes two, before I get up at 6.30. When I get home for lunch, about 1.30, he is just coming to. By 2.30, it's too hot to mow the grass, but just right for the beach.

Honesty compels me to admit that he did set a new record this time. He got in at 3.30 one morning, and was just struggling downstairs for breakfast at 5.30 p.m., when his accomplices of the night before arrived to pick him up for a date they'd made for 7 p.m. Even they were a bit startled.

Oh well, youth and all that jazz. I guess. Anyway, he's off to his summer job, working on a cruise boat on the west coast. Got a free rail pass from the company.

He started figuring out his expenses for the trip out. A berth for three nights; meals in the diner for three days; perhaps a couple of nights in a

Vancouver hotel in case his boat wasn't in, plus meals for those two days. My jaw dropped gradually but steadily during this recital.

He was pretty badly shaken up when I told him he would be renting a pillow for 25 cents and sleeping in his seat, would be eating ham sandwiches wherever the train stopped long enough, and would stay at the YMCA when he got there.

We compromised on \$50. My wife and I were talking it over. "It seems odd," she said, "that forking out \$50 so he can

get to a job, so that he can save money, so that it won't cost us so much next year." I agreed.

Anyway, our vacation plans for the summer are made. A week ago, the old girl stated flatly that the only trip we could afford this summer was a week camping in a government camp, with a borrowed tent.

Ten minutes after he'd left, she informed me that we were making a trip to the west coast, and taking a cruise on Hugh's boat.

WICKS' WEEK



"It's little and round and white all over."

Mr. and Mr. Marshall Lawrence are attending a linguistic school in North Dakota in preparation for work in mission fields. Mr. Lawrence's parents, Mr. and Mrs. H. Lawrence have come from Moosonee to take charge of Schreiber Gospel Mission where a summer bible school for children is being conducted.

Schreiber was captivated by two groups of highschool students from Quebec who stopped over here on Saturday and Sunday while on a cross Canada tour. These tours are sponsored by Club Jeunesse Camping of Montreal.

The Saturday group had 168 boys with Father Robt. Comtois as Chaplain, Claude Dumont and Yves Lemaire as directors and twenty-eight other counsellors. They left after attending Mass in Holy Angels Church on Sunday morning.

The 175 girls arrived Sunday afternoon, accompanied by Father Simard, the Misses Diane Heon and Michelle Ringuette and counsellors. Both groups made the High School their headquarters, sleeping on the gym floor and cooking camp style on the grounds. Local students were encouraged and welcomed to fraternize. One aim of the tour is to meet others of their own ages in the other provinces. Many Schreiber and Terrace Bay students accepted the invitation. This is the second such tour and the number participating increases yearly.

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