

Duck Comes Through Floor On A Mighty Stormy Night

By HAL BOYLE

OCRACOKE, N. C., April 2 (AP)—"Big Ike" O'Neal can still hear the sea, but it doesn't say anything to him anymore.

"Ain't done a stroke of work for eleven years now," said "Big Ike," sitting in a rocker in the weathered frame house where he lives now, a sailor home from the waves.

He still tells his hours by a fine old cathedral clock he paid \$2.50 for 59 years ago. Almost 82, "Big Ike" is one of the few veterans of the era of sail left on this small island off the North Carolina coast, part of the "outer banks" which seamen know as the graveyard of the Atlantic.

Time has chipped away some of "Big Ike's" 240 pounds but hasn't bent his six-foot-three frame. Nor has it slowed his fondness for "yarning" about the days that are gone, when the Hatteras shoals seized rich ships and turned them into sea skeletons.

"I'm glad to see you—or anybody else for that matter," said "Big Ike" the night I called on him. "I can't talk so well, because I'm using somebody else's teeth. I bought 'em all right. But they ain't really my own teeth. That's why I say I'm using somebody else's teeth."

And "Big Ike's" laugh set the window curtains waving on the other side of the room. O'Neal has been a sailor between the coast and the West Indies, a fisherman, a coast guardman, a game warden and carried the U. S. mail.

"I got the measles on my first trip at sea as a fourteen-year-old boy," he said, "and cured myself by drinking a keg of water. Only medicine we had on board. In the West Indies then we paid two cents for a drink of rum. The wooden cups held half a pint. Some of our boys never came back alive."

Two events that stand out in his crowded memory are the first time he ever ate white flour bread and the night the duck flew in through his cottage floor.

"I was eleven years old and

never tasted anything but corn meal," he said. "My brother and a fellow bought a barrel of flour in New York, paid ten dollars for it. We spread a sheet out on the floor, rolled the barrel on it and divided the barrel by sawing it in half. The flour was packed so tight it didn't even crumble or spill."

"You know I didn't sleep at all that night, wondering what flour bread would taste like in the morning."

It was in "the big storm of 18 and 99 that 'Big Ike' had his locally famous encounter with the mysterious duck.

"Longest storm we ever had—lasted from Tuesday afternoon to Friday night," he said. "Had nothing but my olskins on, and there were three or four families in the house—children crying, women screaming, men praying, and water rising outside."

"I was afraid the house would float right off its blocks. I thought if I opened a hole in the kitchen it would equalize the pressure, and help hold the house down."

"I took my ax, hit it a lick. I pulled up a plank, the water slopped in and a big white duck flew up and didn't stop until he hit the ceiling. He was quacking as loud as God would let him."

"I was more than skered. I caught the duck and put him in a box, but I didn't have any appetite for him then. Didn't cook him until the storm was over."

Young men—a cruise in the U. S. Navy is worth a lot to your country and you will benefit by it in many ways. Why not inquire at your local navy recruiting office in the post office building as to its advantages.



Demolition Blast Biggest On Record

HELGOLAND, April 3 (AP)—Demolition experts said today that when the British touch off 3500 tons of explosives on April 18 to destroy German military installations on this island, the concussion probably will penetrate 100 miles into the earth and affect seismographs all over the world.

A British naval officer explained that on the appointed day a button pressed on a ship nine miles off shore will detonate a vast stockpile of explosives, including torpedo warheads, depth charges, gelignite and TNT stored in a eight-and-a-half mile maze of tunnels.

Divorces Top Marriages

The number of divorces out ran Dan Cupid for the first time this year when 32 married couples called it "quits" in the circuit courtroom at the county courthouse, while 26 hopeful aspirants to marital bliss, signed their license applications downstairs in the office of the county clerk.

Almost as many divorce complaints were filed downstairs in the circuit clerk's office, most of them still awaiting action. A total of 31 complaints was filed, 30 of them for divorce and one asking for an annulment. The major charge, as usual, was cruel and inhuman treatment, only three desertions being listed.

New Homes

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Alaska Phone Line Opens

SEATTLE, April 3 (AP)—Another step in improvement of communications to Alaska was reached Wednesday, the Alaska communications system said, with formal opening of the Alcan telephone and telegraph lines for commercial service between Alaska and Canada and the United States.

Inauguration of the new service was highlighted by a telephone conference call today among Alaskan delegates E. L. Bartlett from his office in Washington, Col. T. J. Tully, commanding officer of the ACS, from his Seattle office, Mayor Francis C. Bowden at Anchorage, Mayor Hjalmer A. A. Nordale at Fairbanks, Mayor William F. Devin at Seattle and Mayor Earl Riley at Portland.

The scheduled conference call (11:30 a. m. PST) involved an all wire hookup of more than 5000 miles.

The Alcan telephone and telegraph line, constructed by the U. S. signal corps during the war at a cost of about \$10,000,000, is being put to commercial use through coordinated efforts of the ACS and the northwest communication system, representing the United States and Canadian governments, respectively.

You do not have to be one of the best to pass the Eddy Test. The Eddy Test is to prove your adaptability to Radio Electronics. Why not take it now, at the navy recruiting office. You are under no obligations.

Britons Debate Question Of "Test Tube" Babies

LONDON, April 2 (AP)—Having "test tube" babies was condemned as adultery and defended as a way to brighten childless homes in a series of lectures published today by the Public Morality Council.

The issue was important here because of the declining population, a high rate of childless marriages, and the number of unmarried women and young widows deprived of husbands and children by the war.

Most churchmen said artificial insemination is "degrading" and adulterous unless the donor is the woman's husband.

Doctors who treat couples unable to reproduce normally said artificial insemination, either by the husband or a stranger, was "often justifiable."

Lawyers said children born after artificial insemination by a stranger are illegitimate.

A sociologist, Prof. E. O. Jones of London university, said artificial insemination by a third person jeopardized rather than safeguarded marital happiness.

One practitioner, Dr. Mary Barton, said there has been 300 "test tube" babies born in England in the last five years after artificial insemination by strangers and "thousands" born after

artificial insemination by husbands.

Dr. Barton, a gynecologist who has arranged artificial inseminations, said 10 per cent of all British marriages were infertile and adoption, in 70 per cent of the cases, would not satisfy the woman's maternal instincts.

RABBIT SHOW

PORTLAND, April 2 (AP)—More than 100 animals are expected to be displayed in the first annual Pacific coast rabbit show opening here tomorrow. It will end Sunday.

City Delivery Service, Ph. 8417.

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