

### Spring House Cleanin'

By FRANK TRIFF

No matter how much industry one might care to instill into his children, no matter how rugged his own boyhood, he would be a mean father who would wish back the carpet stretcher and the old carpet flail.

Spring house cleaning in the manner of the 90s takes status of a museum piece to the modern housekeeper; in fact few of the most immaculate among them have much notion of the speck-hunt their grandmothers made of it.

Many who hover around 80 will know whereof I speak, can check my veracity, so I must exaggerate with caution. This is to be the honest truth about spring house cleaning as I knew it. I'll go to court before abstracting a word.

There were only three in our family—just pop and mom and me. My father could cut high capers with tools, could repair or build anything. But he would have moved alone to Pat Walsh's railroaders' hotel, or Steve Blyley's, before he would have raised a finger with house cleaning. So I was mother's little helper, even to high school days, when her little helper weighed 180.

Come spring I envied pop's household philosophy. But mom had the Indian sign on me and together we housecleaned. It started as soon as the frost was out of the ground and warm sun peeked through.

Everything went out of every room, and I mean everything. Tacked down carpets came up. The pine floors were scrubbed on hands and knees. The woodwork and windows were washed, the shades unrolled, cleaned and maybe turned. The bedsteads were taken apart, heaven knows why; every coil of the springs was wiped off. The mattresses went out on the grass, were pounded with beaters and turned over and over again.

Blankets and washable winter bedding went through the old Armstrong washer—25 minutes of backache to every washerful. The curtains and portieres got theirs and down came the curtain poles and fixtures too—one point upon which mom and I vociferously disagreed.

But it was the carpets which made life just not worth living and took all the joy out of spring. Today's cliff dwellers don't know any more about carpets than a rabbit. We knew less about finished floors and rugs.

Carpets covered every floor except the kitchen. We had no bathroom—just a chummy two holes. Carpets were nailed each four inches close up to the baseboard. From coming up and down, the floor was so perforated around the edges that it looked like a solid oak punch board.

Once extracted from their secure location floor coverings went to the clothes line and got the daylight whaled out of them. My mother's lotion was that no carpet was clean until beaten in a brisk wind for one full day, then spread on the grass and swept both sides. This beating job couldn't be shirked, 'cause no matter where in the house mom worked she could tell when I stopped beating.

Then they all had to go back down and with the same dull and twisted carpet tacks, which were supposed to last at least three extractions. Most of our carpets were cheap Ingrain which had to be stretched to lay flat.

The stretcher was a vicious gadget, an enemy of carpets and of all who used them. Fingers in a board, upon which you knelt, caught the carpet while you used a hooked-on lever to stretch the edge to the wall so you could tack it. Carpets tore, except the choice Brussels in the parlor, fingers bled, mothers raved and sons learned to curse, at least under their breath. The stair carpet also was a master creation of the devil.

Newspapers or straw went under the carpets. I guess that's how newspapers got going—to be put under carpets and on pantry shelves. After the part they played in my young life as a carpet layer, why I went in the newspaper business is beyond me. Just to get even I guess.

Once when I handled a mail order advertising account the firm got an order from a 15-year-old newspaper ad. They're all keyed, you know, I wrote the customer to learn how come. What do you think she replied?

She found the ad in a paper under a carpet in an old country place which she bought to remodel. We sold her a bill of goods.

Now let's hear radio tell one.

### Hager

Larry Snyder returned Sunday from Salem where he visited his cousins, Kent and Thirza Goekner and reports a fine visit there.

Mrs. Robert Moxing was on the sick list Monday.

Mr. and Mrs. Herman have gone on a vacation trip.

The junior, sophomore and freshman classes of Henley high school are presenting three one-act plays at the Henley gym April 20, Tuesday, starting at 8 p. m.

The farmers around here are beginning to get their land ready for seeding.

Mr. and Mrs. Louis Hendrickson entertained at a dinner at their home here Sunday. The following were guests, Mr. and Mrs. R. J. Bretches, Mr. and Mrs. William Cusick, Mr. and Mrs. Harvey Fowler, Mrs. Collins, Mr. Shook, Ernest Pitts, Dale Hendrickson, Darlene and Orville Pitts, Milly Roberts, Mrs. Julie Ledbetter and Edna Keeler.

Guy Barton visited at Merrill over the week-end. Best wishes to Barbara Reeder, who was recently married to Hugh Stapleton of Eugene.

Mr. McDonald's father from Portland is visiting here. Mrs. O'Reilly and Mrs. R. Moxing are having fine luck with their baby chicks which they purchased some time ago.

Several from this community attend the show, "Sitting Pretty," that was featured at a Klamath Falls theatre this past week.

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