

# Out Of The Night Of Morganton

THE INSTITUTION—North Carolina has invested a lot of money in building the State Hospital for the Insane at Morganton. This Tom Franklin staff photograph is a general view of the hospital building.



NOTE—Mr. Jimison is widely known in North Carolina where he has been a minister, lawyer and newspaper columnist. Several months ago he left the State Hospital for the Insane at Morganton after having been there as a patient for a year. This article is the first of a series of sixteen in which he gives a factual account of his experiences and observations while at the institution.—Editors, The News.

## First of a Series in Which a Former Patient Reveals the Manner In Which North Carolina Cares for Its Mentally Ill Citizens

By TOM P. JIMISON  
ON MAY 8, 1941, I was dismissed from the North Carolina Hospital at Morganton after having spent slightly more than a year there as a patient. Members of the staff would tell me that they had been unable to find anything wrong with me, that I was sound both in body and mind. I was committed to the institution of my own will in the Spring of 1940. I was physically run down, mentally and emotionally upset, and was right much alarmed by certain information which my physicians had given me. It turned out, happily, that my physicians were mistaken. Or maybe the hospital doctors were wrong.

It may be also that I had a sort of hankering to see how the institution at Morganton was run. In the past I had had a number of friends and a few clients who had been patients there, and I had heard much from them about the place. I had put most of it down as the exaggeration of diseased mentality, but I wanted to see for myself. And after I got there I stayed a sufficient length of time to find out about it right through. After I had been at the hospital two months I was told that I could get discharged without much difficulty, but I elected to remain.

It was back in April of 1940 that I got a brother lawyer to fix up the papers for me and get a couple of friendly lawyers to sign the petition before the Clerk of the Mecklenburg County Superior Court. Then my lawyer took me and turned me over to the sheriff to be locked up in the county jail until such time as I would be convenient for the department of the county to take me to the asylum. I did not mind this at all. You see, I knew Sheriff Riley and his deputies very well. They were my friends. I was put in the hospital department of the county basement and was treated with much courtesy and kindness during the two weeks I remained there.

You ask me how I went to jail? Well, my "agent" in North Carolina to become demoted. A man may have pneumonia, typhoid, gout or gonorrhea without running counter to the peace and order of the State, but if he becomes mentally ill the usual procedure is to issue a lunacy warrant, have the victim arrested by police officers and incarcerated in jail until such time as the sheriff deems it to transport him to the asylum. He is treated not like a sick man, but like a criminal.

IT'S A TOUGH ROAD  
At best, the present procedure is of a quasi-criminal nature, and the average patient received in the hospital at Morganton after a no-jury in a filthy jail, and it frequently happens that the patient is in the hands of some unempathetic peace officers. I have seen many arrive there covered with vomit from some county jail and frightened within an inch of their lives. They get out of a bad start. That is, they should not have gone crazy in the first place.

Not only is it a violation of the law to be demoted, but it is also a deep disgrace. To be sure there is no stigma attached to physical illness. If one suffers from cirrhosis of the liver, coronary thrombosis, angina pectoris, or any other disease, his condition is freely discussed by his relatives and friends, and sometimes men here actually boast that his ailment is so severe that it has perplexed even the best of his physicians. But if his mental machinery is warped, if his emotional balance is shaky, if he is tormented by worry and disturbed by fear, then he is a disgrace and a reproach to his family and friends.

Society does not believe that the mind may slip its trolley pole as readily as the liver may lose its plumb, or that the processes of intelligence may be as easily disturbed as the processes of digestion. The public is quite sure that a murmur in the head is worse than one in the heart and that it is much more shameful to have a confused mind than it is to be afflicted with cerebral, pulmonary or liver trouble. This explains why the physically-ailing are tenderly nursed while the mentally ill are hurried off to public asylums where they are incarcerated like felons and practically forgotten by society.

DESERVED BY KIN  
I knew numerous patients at Morganton whose families were prominent in the social, business and professional life of the state. One would think that these would be the objects of solicited attention on the part of their kin. But

it was not so. Their families seldom visited them. They wrote to them infrequently, and were sparing, not to say downright stingy, with money for incidentals. The humble classes fare better than the ones who come from pretentious families. Their folks are less sensitive and more sensible. I have known a poor family to skip and save for weeks in order to pay a visit to a disgraced husband and father and bring him some little tokens of their affection.

To be sure the mental patient does not need much company. The psychiatrists are agreed on that. Usually he very sorely needs to forget, and visitors may unwittingly remind him of the entanglements which unhinged him and wrought his undoing. But he does desperately need encouragement, and he needs enough attention from his family and the public to enable him to hold his head up and maintain his self-respect. The treatment at Morganton is not of a nature to make one tilt his chin or stick out his chest. The place is little short of a penal institution.

I shall go into all this later on, but here is a good place to explain that nothing I shall say in this account has the slightest personal feeling in it. I was treated with the greatest consideration by the staff and employees of the hospital. I ate in the cafeteria with the attendants and nurses, was frequently a guest in the homes of the doctors and employees, and was sometimes called upon for legal advice. My opinion is that any man with a reasonable amount of common sense and diplomacy could get along right well there for an indefinite length of time.

It had better also be said that when patients are discussed here their real names are not used. Many of them are sensitive about being there, feel about it much as they would were they in prison. Then it might unnecessarily embarrass their families. The names of the medical staff and employees used here, however, are their real names.

(Continued Tomorrow)

# Churchill Flew Plane Part of Way

## Took Over Controls On Ocean Journey

LONDON — (AP) — The saga of Prime Minister Winston Churchill's spectacular visit to Washington was given new color today by the disclosure that he personally had piloted part way across the Atlantic the big 74-passenger flying boat in which he returned to Britain Saturday.

The disclosure was made by Commander J. C. Rogers, captain of the plane, who said the Prime Minister had banked the giant ship through two sweeping turns after getting the feel of the controls. Churchill learned to fly before the World War, and caused some concern in Parliament during that conflict by risking his life in the air while serving as First Lord of the Admiralty.

His latest exploit was in keeping with an adventurous career that has endeared him to the British public. Rogers, who described the Atlantic crossing as uneventful, said the Prime Minister had displayed "the keenest interest in operational technicalities" during the flight.

"It was just after breakfast," he said, "when Mr. Churchill came striding onto the control deck, wearing his athena suit and smoking a cigar. After he had taken over he remarked that the aircraft was much different from the plane he had flown in 1913."

U. S. PLANES ON GUARD  
Rogers disclosed, that United States planes had escorted the flying boat during the first part of its trip, which was carried out with great secrecy. So closely guarded were plans for the flight that few of those responsible for keeping contact with planes crossing the Atlantic knew they were sending directions and weather reports to a plane bearing Churchill homeward.

On four upholstery-strengthened benches and seats of a modish airplane wing dope. If the thread should break some time later, the hope will keep the repair from unraveling.



CHURCHILL AT HOME AGAIN AFTER VISIT WITH FDR.—Churchill is met by dogish expression and smoking a big cigar. Prime Minister Winston Churchill is met by his wife on returning to London after his epochal visit to the United States and Canada. Picture by cable from London.

## Last of Mt. Pleasant:

# Lutheran Institute Sold, Finis Written To Short-Lived School

KANNAPOLIS — Properly of the old Mount Pleasant Collegiate Institute at Mount Pleasant finally has been sold.

The property was divided up into small tracts and sold to a number of businessmen in Concord and Albemarle and other places, according to H. E. Isenhour of Salisbury, who acted as the school board's agent in the sale.

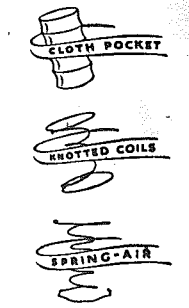
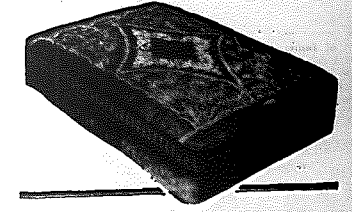
The various tracts are to be used for commercial and residential purposes. It is understood.

## BOUGHT FOR LIBRARY

A portion of the school ground on which a water tank is located was purchased by the town of Mount Pleasant and it is understood that one of the buildings, bought by a private

buyer, will be renovated and turned into a public library. It is expected that most of the property, which is located in a quiet residential section, will be used for residences. Some, however, may be put to commercial uses. At least three of them constructed of brick and used formerly for class rooms and dormitories, are on the property. DEEDS DELIVERED  
The property was sold at auction and the deeds have been delivered. Mr. Isenhour did not disclose the selling price.

What Is There About SPRING-AIR THAT MAKES IT FUNDAMENTALLY BETTER THAN THE ORDINARY MATTRESS?



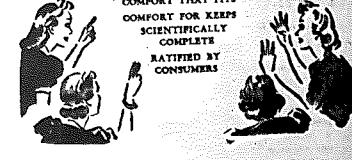
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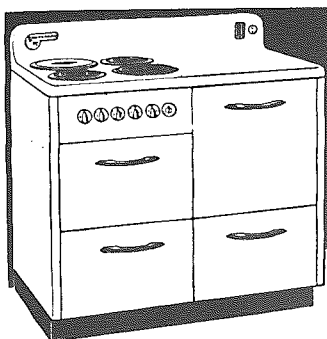
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(Right)  
Simple striped chambray with buttons for front and side fastenings. Fun to frolic in. All colors. In 12-20, 38-46. \$2.48.

Start the day off right . . . In coffee! Whether you get up to cook his breakfast, or take a snappy nap until noon . . . you'll need a beauty house dress to slip on some time before sundown!

(Left)  
Zip yourself into this pretty print. Flattering as your beau when you pass around the 'fudge'. All colors and sizes. \$2.48.

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(Right)  
Simple striped chambray with buttons for front and side fastenings. Fun to frolic in. All colors. In 12-20, 38-46. \$2.48.

They're bright and right with rows of ric rac or button-trim. Many feature cute collars, fancy pockets and zippered fronts. You'll find them flowered, striped, dotted and checked at Ivey's!

(Left)  
Zip yourself into this pretty print. Flattering as your beau when you pass around the 'fudge'. All colors and sizes. \$2.48.

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