

### Out or In?

Following the village election on April 8th, I intended to write a little editorial comment and protest entitled "Comedy at the Falls," but since my schedule of deadlines is a little complicated, such a comment would have been slightly out of date by the time it got printed.

However, as far as I can find out, the question involved has not yet been settled, so perhaps its new time to discuss it, so that the whole thing may be clarified BEFORE THE NEXT VILLAGE ELECTION TWO YEARS FROM NOW!

The whole point was that there seemed to be no agreement whatever among the "authorities" as to whether that part of Placita north of Pueblo River and east of Highway No. 3, was or was not now included within the Taos Village limits.

Fully a week before election day, I carefully checked with the Village Attorney, Mr. Elia Romero, and was told that the little enclave involved composed of the Mirer's, the Martinez's, the Harper's, the Howell's and my own property definitely WAS NOW within the village limits, as a result of none of us having protested our inclusion when several additional areas were proposed more than a year ago. Residents of the other areas DID protest, however, and were not included.

I consequently presented myself at the polls on April 8th, was handed a ballot—and was then asked if I lived on the other side of the river or not. Admitting that I did, indeed, live on the far side of the stream, I nevertheless protested that Mr. Romero, Village Attorney, had told me that I was now a resident of Taos Village.

At this point, one of our Taos County representatives in the State Legislature matched the ballot from my hand and announced that I must have been the son of one of our village councilmen "in" and the son of one of our village councilmen "out" and that I was in the "wrong" line.

I consequently moved on obediently, repaired to the nearest phone booth, called the Village Attorney, was again told that I was a bona fide resident of the village, and the man of the councilmen who were probably hovering about the polls in a protective manner, an "out" to insist upon my right to vote.

On my return, I was again questioned, I again quoted the village attorney, the hovering councilmen were returned but seemed uncertain, vague or disgruntled, and the man of the town showed only a dither line, not a solid one, around the disputed area.

Finally, I was rather ungraciously "allowed" to vote, but my ballot was promptly popped into an envelope marked "challenged." Meanwhile, some of my neighbors who reside in the disputed area were not even allowed a challenged vote.

End of incident.

Since then, I have not been informed as to whether my vote was counted or thrown out, whether the second-class citizens on the other side of the creek are residents of the village or not, whether the Village Attorney, the Mayor and Councilmen have agreed or not as to who is Who and Where is What.

I would still like to know and respectfully request not only a formal notification of my status as a resident or non-resident of the village, but an explanation of the advantages, if any, of being a resident, whether or not I am one.

For instance, besides the "right to vote," is a resident guaranteed inclusion in the village water and sewer system? Is the village garbage disposal service available to him? Does he have to pay additional taxes? May he keep a chicken?

You see, I want to know EVERYTHING, sometime between now and 1962, but preferably A-ONCE.

### Dam Site

In a wide sweep of the Chama River, not far from the main highway, 84 between Espanola and Tierra Amarilla, but far enough away so that passers-by are given no clue as to the Big Diggins being in progress, there are hundreds of men and machines busily filling with mere dirt, a great, rocky, crescent-shaped canyon.

The gap is so deep and long that, despite the size and number of the trucks involved in the work, it seems to be progressing at a snail's pace, and as though the canyon is being filled a tablespoonful at a time.

This project is called, as you no doubt know, Abiquiu Dam, although it is several miles above the village by that name, and is only a few miles hidden among a clump of big cottonwood below the town, is a new little village of house-trailers, which apparently shelter the families of the few men who don't want to commute so far as Espanola and Riverside.

Incidentally, still further down the road toward Espanola, is another clutch of trailers beside a lonely gas station, and here each trailer—and they are only tents, which makes them look like a row of freight-coupled insects, solid steel as though they had just escaped a dangerous enemy.

But, to get back to the dam: a week or so ago, as a mere tourist, I drove off the highway where a small sign points the way to the dam, but indicates that visitors are not welcome, except on business. The road leads to a number of austere, official-looking buildings on the rim, and then snakes abruptly into the depths of the canyon itself, where you are



Shaded Area = Village of Taos = Disputed Placita Addition

suddenly halted by ominous stop-signs. But if you persist, and take the last rocky trail on foot, you will be rewarded by a spectacle of mad activity that is breathtaking.

From atop the canyon about a mile, a conveyor-able earth—which nevertheless is sufficient to fill a continuous procession of enormous trucks. These trucks simultaneously, passing each other at break-neck speed to the bottom of the canyon, automatically dump their loads in a matter of seconds, and race back up the side of the canyon to be refilled—so that there is an impressive race in both directions of such frantic haste that the watcher has an impression that he is witnessing one of the more dangerous mountain-climbing automobile marathons of the low-lying racing-circuit.

The excitement of this mad tumbling speed-contest is much more thrilling than any ordinary race, in that the participants are rushing in both directions simultaneously, passing each other at break-neck speeds on mountain-road-like curves that would horrify any self-respecting traffic cop who ever caught an ordinary motorist even approximating such crazy abandon.

The drivers of these hurtling behemoths or juggernauts are so caked with the clouds of dust and dirt that rise not only from the tons of the overloaded, down-rushing trucks, but that it throws around the whirling wheels of the racers in both directions, that they look like fends out of hell. And they are so shaken by the constant bang and bump of their lumbering vehicles, that they seem to be braced like astronauts in a continual battle against the danger of being hurled bodily from their seats into outer space.

The spectacle is consequently exciting, but also harrowing and exhausting, so that the participants are by no means as collegial, starchy or football-tackles, as ordinary motorists in flat-land races.

I can only add, in an attempt to further impress you, that this terrific race goes on not only all day long, but through the night as well, the night-shift working under great searchlights that beat down on the inferno from the canyon rim above.

And yet, even at this phenomenal speed, it takes me as long as though it were to take YEARS to fill that prodigious canyon with enough mud to hold the roaring Chama in leash. So don't rush for work, as once, in order not to miss the show, for it will be on for a long, long time.

In fact, this particular dam site will be a spectacle for a dam sight longer than any of us taxpayers will care to nav the bill.

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## THE HORSE FLY

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### Next To Godliness

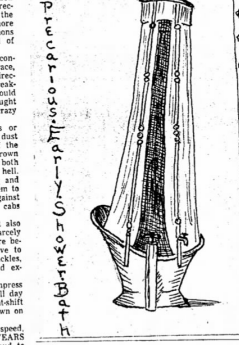
Frances Crane has loaned me a book entitled "Clean and Decent" by Lawrence Wright, Viking Press, N. Y., \$4.80. This purports to be "The Unruffled History of the Bathroom and the W.C." It was passed on to me because of my frequent boast that I have none, necessarily, but need by a couple of visiting friends.

The first of these was a collapsible affair, made of rubber-coated canvas, which was so treacherous and so difficult to empty, that it eventually became only an out-of-doors summer tub which could be conveniently overturned in the patio. (See accompanying photograph, where it is being used as a bilaboo nest by a couple of visiting friends.)

The second was a historic tin tub which I purchased from Gerson Gaudier, who assured me that it was the Very First Bath Tub ever to reach the village of Taos. It looked like, indeed, still looks like a covar sarcophagus; and it, too, has had a strange attraction for my friends in the past, all of whom treated upon crawling into it and trying it for size, drawing a water the general outside with doubtfully nutritious water after every bath. (An inaccurate drawing of a water is reproduced on this page—but the tub itself can be seen in the Kit Carson Museum, where it will doubtless some day be labeled as Christopher's own.)

My third annual tub was extremely angular and uncomfortable, but elegantly constructed of slabs of genuine marble. It was built by Mrs. Richardson during World War II, when bath tubs were scarce, and I acquired it along with the house, along about 1950. The house has changed hands twice since, and is now again for sale. I understand—so, if you're interested in a tub, you may wish to be labeled as Christopher's own.)

The third of my tubs which I claim as different



I have dedicated myself in the study of such to develop the knowledge of the traditional and popular customs of individual countries. I advocate that this primarily falls on the visual understanding of the students, it becomes elaborated into the mind, making it easier to absorb. Certainly to comply with this, all the material necessary would be impossible. In order to renounce, so much I believe you have the opportunity to help me and no one else, that is to furnish the appropriate material, and it is my intention to develop my initiative under the folkloric aspect that primarily impresses the children. I wish to present in your to gather dolls dressed with the original country's costume because they can also serve as models for other sewers of my alumnae.

It is pointed or referred any of these dolls that I dare ask dressed with a costume more characteristic of Italy and making it part of the characteristics of the costume. I hope that my initiative will become examined attentively and that the idea signifies it will not vanish; will help to make the knowledge of other countries the union of fraternity. It would be a form of admirable collaboration between the people and cooperation between the students and others, and would render these together and manifest pride in others. While appreciative of a sincere heart, I present my most vivid knowledge and my obsequious respect.

TEACHER MARTA VENTURI

Unfortunately I cannot report what the governor either thought or did in response. Perhaps he ignored the whole thing; perhaps he at once sent his secretary out into the town to find and purchase authentic Indian and Spanish Colonial dolls which he forthwith mailed to Teacher Venturi, perhaps he national Folk Art—in which case negotiations are probably still in progress, involving exchange exhibits, customs declarations, exchange rates, monetary fringing, confining lira, peso and dollar, and countless translated and retranslated letters, all of this resulting in mounting confusion.

All I can say is, it's too bad Miss Marta Venturi didn't write directly to Mr. Constantine Anillo in Taos, who is also a teacher, also a collector of toys and dolls of different cultures for use in his classes and was, besides of Italian descent and might conceivably have simplified the whole situation by eliminating at least two vitriolic foreign languages, as well as two suspicious politicians.

## THE HORSE FLY

### Early or Garden Variety of Bath?

It is in most respects perfectly conventional in its pattern, it is equipped with the usual hot and cold taps, it is similar to the ones illustrated in contemporary plumbing catalogues—BUT IT IS UNUSUAL, and marvellous, when not in use as a tub under colorful serapes and pillows as a couch in the sun-room. (See Horse Fly No. 10, March 10th, 1960, where it appears, as cross-section, as the hiding place for a Bode.)

To one so fascinated by bathroom fixtures, the book "Clean and Decent" is of course a delight. It is full of amazing historical details, tracing the history of bathing from the earliest Greek, Roman and Egyptian civilizations to the present day, noting the strange lapses to the evolutionary flow of bath-use and lingering affectionately among the erotic details of promiscuous bathing.

One of the strangest anomalies pointed out is the unpredictable unevenness of mankind's progress in his bathroom habits: the first known bath starts because its form, dating from about 1700 B.C., or some 3000 years ago, is almost identical with the form of today. It is, moreover, set in an elegant bathroom with efficient plumbing. When its picture is put alongside that of a bath of 1891 A.D., few can say instantly, which is which.

And again, a living Englishman has complained of his Oxford college that it denied him the everyday sanitary conveniences of Milton Crete. The 16teenth century gentleman used the bath, but his nineteenth century descendant did not. The man of 1850 enjoyed more orderly plumbing, and his nineteenth century descendant did not. And the Polynesian "savages" was cleaner than either.

But, even if you can't read, or don't want to even if you're not interested in the strange uses and development of plumbing and the vagaries of human attitudes on the subject, it's unlikely that the most casual peruser of this book will not be entranced by the illustrations. There are literally hundreds of them, from painted Grecian vases and engraving by Durrer and Dore, down to detailed drawings from Victorian plumbers' catalogues.

The result is that without reading a line of the text, you can SEE the history of the bathroom in these pages, even though you may not agree with the subtitle on the jacket, that this history is "unruffled."

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### Riposte

(An open letter to Stan Anillo, who has been guilty, apparently, of "poking fun" at the "southern accent" of this last year's signa herself Scarlett.)

Dear Stan—

I have aimed to write you this letter ever since you came back from Summer School, way last year. But when I was in the mood, I couldn't find a pain to write with.

I sure hope you continue to do (frustrate to wit) Summer Schooling. Was things at your place all right when you come back? We tried to do a little work around our place last summer. But coal was in short supply in June and I had to attend that first. My richest Aunt came to visit, and I didn't know she was coming. So that first morning, we didn't have any bread to make (not for breakfast, but we ate bacon and eggs alone. We had orange juice, but when I started to pour from the pitcher in the glass, I spilled it all over her and the flow of chin-chew just see my face! I bet she don't have nothin' now.

We made a new family last summer. It's a babe. I bet it's pretty well, but not awfully tarted before we finished. Our garden wasn't any good. I don't know why, cause I've been famine all my life. I sure hope it's better this year.

Another new niece was born lately, so I have to go down to the Tin Sn Stow and pick out some thing and fix her up a barker. Must close.

Well, vuk come kids. Must close.

SCARLETT.

