

Political story:

In the 1920's Mr. C. held public office and many meetings of his political party were held in his office in the courthouse. For several meetings Mr. C. suspected that someone was eavesdropping in the furnace room below. One night at one such meeting when Mr. C. and his friends were discussing party matters they realized someone was underneath the room listening. When money matters were to be discussed they moved into an adjoining room used for Mr. C.'s daily naps. From this room they could not be heard. After they discussed money they went back into the regular office and talked loudly about their campaigning money but mentioned only 1/3 the amount. The eavesdropper ran as soon as he found out this information for the opposition party. When election time came the opposition soon ran out of money and were greatly puzzled as to where Mr. C. and his party came up with all the unaccounted for money.

Barbara McKenzie
Morehead, Kentucky
November 29, 1971-date interviewed

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Mr. D. ran for jailer in the 1920's. When election returns came in Mr. D had lost. Mr. D. felt everyone was very sympathetic and all offered their regrets and assured him he had had their vote. Mr. D. became known for saying, "By damn, it's a funny thing to me everybody I've seen since the election voted for me and I still managed to lose." After that even his political enemies teased him by saying he had sure had their vote.

Barbara McKenzie
Morehead, Kentucky
November 20, 1971-date interviewed

Mrs. Bertha Richardson-age 69
Clearfield, Rowan, Kentucky
Story:

At Dry Creek voting house many years ago an old drunk could not be persuaded to leave the voting house. Finally he staggered to the corner and fell asleep. It was not long until the election officers had a good laugh, watching a big black snake come to rest on the sleeping man.

Barbara McKenzie
Morehead, Kentucky
November 12, 1971-date interviewed

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Mr. B. who was running for representative was giving a speech at the courthouse. Mr. B. saw an old friend and he asked if he could count on his vote. The old man said he did not know. Mr. B said he had done so much for the old man. He had had a road paved for him and gotten jobs for his daughter and son-in-law. The old man replied, "Well, you haven't done anything for me lately".

Barbara McKenzie
Morehead, Kentucky
November 29, 1971-date interviewed

(8)

Mr. Vernon Alfrey-age 74
Morehead, Rowan County, Kentucky
Political story:

Mr. Alfrey talked about the Rowan County feud which started on election day in the late 1800's. Mr. Alfrey said the feud really started over politics and he feels many people won't talk about it today because of hard feelings which still exist.

Barbara McKenzie
Morehead, Kentucky
November 29, 1971

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Mr. Vernon Alfrey-age 74
Morehead, Rowan County, Kentucky
Political story:

Mr. A. served as judge for Rowan County.
He was uneducated but widely known and liked. One
story greatly circulated about Mr. A. was the case
he tried concerning a mentally insane prisoner. It
is said Mr. A. confined this person to an insane
asylum for being an "i-dot." This was about fifty
years ago. Mr A. joined in the fun caused by his
mispronunciation of "i-dot" for idiot.

Barbara McKenzie
Morehead, Kentucky
November 29, 1971-date interviewed

One day, Mr. A. who was running for office in the late 1920's, gave money and other "commodities" to a preacher to use in Mr. A's campaign. Mr. A. later that day, went to see how the preacher was doing. He found the preacher in a house at Hoggetown with a whole "mess of people" electioneering against Mr. A. Mr. A. never heard so much "fiddling" and "a-carryings on" and his money was paying for it.

Barbara McKenzie
Morehead, Kentucky
November 29, 1971

About the turn of the century Mr. K. and Mr. H., who were close neighbors, were running against each other for tax commissioner. Mr. K was uneducated while Mr. H. was very educated. Mr. H., feeling he was better qualified and hating to run against his friend went to Mr. K. and asked him to not run. Mr. K. said he would think about it. When Mr. H. returned for the answer Mr. K. answered by saying "I'm gwine to flingin' my cerds", meaning he had decided to run and was starting his electioneering.

Barbara McKenzie
Morehead, Kentucky
November 29, 1971

Back several years ago there was a candidate, Mr. X. running for county attorney. Many said all Mr. X. did was chew and whittle. Many of his opponents complained about Mr. X. chewing tobacco and whittling so much. But, when returns came in Mr. X. had won. One Morehead banker said that Mr. X. was hard to beat, another one replied, "Yes, he did a whittling good job." This became a local slogan for him.

Barbara McKenzie
Morehead, Kentucky
November 29, 1971

Mr. B. was running for jailer in Rowan County about thirty years ago. It was said he walked all over the county to electioneer. Although Mr. B. was pretty sure he had every vote in the county in his favor he decided to walk over the county one more time to see everyone again and insure his landslide. When election returns came in Mr. B. had only 13 votes. He not only lost the election but had a dozen corns besides. This story was spread on Mr. B. and caused him much embarrassment.

Barbara McKenzie
Morehead, Kentucky
November 29, 1971-date interviewed

(11) MR. RAIPH DAVIS, age 51
Morehead, Rowan County, Kentucky
Political story:

Mr. M. was running for public office. While listening to returns he became frightened that maybe he would not receive any votes. His companion tried to comfort him by saying "By, gum, there's got to be some damn fool silly enough to vote for you."

Barbara McKenzie
Morehead, Kentucky
November 20, 1971-date interviewed

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In early days of elections one side would get the other side's voters and many times would give them whiskey to get them drunk. They would often keep them drunk until after the election to prevent them from voting. Or, sometimes they would sober them up just enough to take them to the polls and vote them across the table for their side.

Barbara McKenzie
Morehead, Kentucky
November 5, 1971-date interviewed

(16) Mrs. Oca Davis-age 74
Morehead, Rowan, Kentucky
Common Practice:

Mrs. Davis feels politicians did more election-eering in the past. This was not necessarily campaign promises, but things like bragging on peoples' ugly children and yes, even kissing babies.

Barbara McKenzie
Morehead, Kentucky
November 5, 1971-date interviewed

In earlier times it was said if it rained on election day Democrats would win because the Republicans were mostly hill people and in the event of rain or bad weather Republicans could not come into the polls to vote. Mr. Alfrey thought this generally held true back then.

Barbara McKenzie
Morehead, Kentucky
November 29, 1971-date interviewed

(18) Mrs. Oda Davis-age 74
Morehead, Rowan County-Kentucky
Common Practice:

Elections in earlier days were really crooked. People would openly buy votes with money or whiskey or other commodities. Mrs. Davis said if one side wanted to win badly enough they would say they'd steal the ballot box.

Barbara McKenzie
Morehead, Kentucky
November 5, 1971

Mrs. Davis can remember hearing her relatives tell of many killings that occurred over elections. Her parents seldom talked about the Rowan County Feud because one was a democrat and one was a Republican and they always ended up taking up sides. But, her mother said men and women were afraid to be in the streets for fear of the opposing party.

Barbara McKenzie
Morehead, Kentucky
November 5, 1971

ROWAN COUNTY FEUD

Come all young men and women
Come fathers, mothers too--
I'll relate to you the story
Of the Rowan County Feud.

Concerning Rowan
And many were indeed,
My friends please give attention
And listen how it reads.

It was in the month of August
And on election day,
John Martin was shot and wounded
They say by Johnny Day.

Martin could not believe it
Although it being so--
He thought it Floyd Tolliver
Who shot the fatal blow.

Martin on seeing Tolliver,
Although some months had passed
When in the town of Morehead
These two men met at last.

Tolliver and a friend or two
About the streets did walk.
They seemed to be uneasy
With no one wished to talk.

The sting of death was near him
Martin rushed into the door.
A few words passed between them
About the row before.

The people soon were frightened
And rushed out of the room,
When a ball from Martin's pistol
Sent Tolliver to his doom.

Young men should all take warning
From the fate of these two men.
Your guns will cause you trouble
On this you may depend.

Barbara McKenzie
Morehead, Kentucky
November 18, 1971-date interviewed

Jokes:

"Kentuckians like to talk about politics too much to kill off anybody on the other side--they'd rather keep them to argue with."

"A politician spends half his time running for office and the other half running for cover."

"The political plum tree grows better after "grafting"."

Barbara McKenzie
Morehead, Kentucky
November 18, 1971

FOLKLORE AND FOLKLIFE COLLECTION
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"When a politician comes to parting of the ways, he goes both ways."

"One time the Democrats paid a man who was known to not be the brightest person in the world to vote straight Democrat. When the man came out of the voting booth they asked him if he voted under the rooster. He replied, "Rooster, heck no, I voted under the coop."

Barbara McKenzie
Morehead, Kentucky
November 20, 1971-date interviewed

S T O R I E S

During Ned Breathitt's administration, there was placed on the ballot a proposal to bring Kentucky's out-moded constitution up to date. The governor ordered all state employees to vote for this amendment.

In the Hogtown precinct there were two votes for and every one of the 12 state workers in the precinct claimed one of these votes. The governor couldn't do anything because he couldn't be sure who had let him down.

The truth of the matter was that they had all done so. The two 'yes' votes were by myself and my wife.

(Atlee Lowe, Elliottville, Ky., date interviewed: 10-31-71)

Linda Lowe

Rowan Co.

People in the country used to walk for miles to the highway to catch a ride to the 'voting house.' The year Roosevelt and Willkie ran for President, my father walked to the highway and was waiting for a ride to vote. After awhile this car came up, taking people to vote. It had Willkie's picture inside the windshield. The driver told my father that he was hauling voters for both sides (anybody who wanted to vote). My father wasn't convinced. He sat there and argued and quarrelled with the driver, saying he wasn't going to ride in no car with Willkie's picture in it. Finally, the driver took down the picture. But he had to hide it under the seat before my father would ride with him.

(Merrill Lowe, Elliottville, Ky., date of origin: 1940, date of interview: 10-30-71)

Linda Lowe

Kowan Co.

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FOLKLORE AND FOLK LIFE COLLECTION

A couple of people in the Hogtown precinct get absentee ballots every election from officials who are buying their votes. These two people vote by absentee ballots and when election day come, they hide out, pretending they are not at home.

(Atlee Lowe, Elliottville, Ky., date of origin unknown, date of interview: 10-31-71)

Linda Lowe

Mr. X ran for jailer. While campaigning, he made the statement he would be the next jailer "sure and God made little green apples." On election day he got one vote--the one he had cast for himself. Even his own wife didn't vote for him.

(Merrill Lowe, Elliottville, Ky., date of origin unknown, date of interview: 10-30-71)

Linda Lowe

D E F I N I T I O N

Republicans--I've always heard that the Republicans are fair weather voters: they just vote when the sun shines.
(Merrill Lowe, Elliottville, Ky., date of origin unknown, date of interview: 10-30-71)

Linda Lowe

P R O V E R B

If you aren't a crook when you go in, you're a crook when
you come out.

(Merrill Lowe, Elliottville, Ky., date of origin unknown,
date of interview: 10-30-71)

Linda Lowe

JOKES

At a Republican rally a small boy went around selling puppies, he would yell, " Republican puppies for sale, Republican puppies for sale." But it seems nobody was buying them but he kept up this chant during the whole rally. About three (3) weeks later there was a Democrat rally and lo and behold the same little boy was selling puppies, but these puppies were different now. He now yelled, " Democrat puppies for sale, Democrat puppies for sale." Well this was too much for our dyed in the wool Republican so he asked the little boy if he wasn't the same boy selling puppies at the Republican rally only three (3) weeks ago. The little boy said yes he was. The Republican then asked the question that was bothering him, if these puppies were Republicans then why are they Democrats now. The little boy was quick to answer, "That's right Mister three (3) weeks ago these puppies were Republicans but today they have gotten their eyes open."

My informant says this joke has been around as long as he can remember and cannot really think of the first time he heard it. He also says that this joke can work with either party and he has heard it both ways and at both rallies.

(4)

Glenda Martens

JOKES

It seems that the Republican candidate for county judge was walking along a dusty country road, he was campaigning. It was August and very hot, he passed by a pond and on the spur of the moment decided to jump in for a cooling swim. About the time that he got into the pond the owner came upon him and he had only enough time to duck his head leaving his exposed behind more or less sticking up out of the water. The owner yelled and told him to get out or he was going home to get his shotgun, our candidate did not move. When the owner left to get his gun, our Republican friend decided it was time to get out and was on his way out when the farmer came back with hi gun. He called the Republican candidate by his name and said, "I just ran your Democrat opponent out of there and I mean for you to get out too."

My informant says he first heard this joke at a Democratic Party rally back in the early twenies. It was in Rowan County and was the election for county-wide offices.

Glenda Martin
 FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
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Rowan Co.

JOKE

It seems this man lived close to a family who had two daughters. They both decided to leave their home in Kentucky and go to Ohio for a while. When they got to Ohio one decided to stay there and the other came back to Kentucky to live. This neighbor decided to visit them and went to see the one who lived in Ohio. He knocked on her door and told her who he was and if he could spent the night with her and her husband, she said he would have to ask her husband. She told him he was working out at the barn and for him to go right on out. When the man got to the barn the only person he saw out there was a colored man, a Negro. This completely confused the neighbor and he went back to the house and told the woman that the only man he saw at the barn was a Negro. She told him yes that was correct, the Negro was her husband. The neighbor was shocked to say the least. So he asked her how she had ever come to marry a Negro and she said, she didn't know but that her sister back in Kentucky did worse than that, she married a Democrat.

This joke was first told at a Democrat rally in 1913, when the informant's father was running for a seat on the Rowan County Board of Education. To full understand this joke you have to understand the people of Eastern Kentucky during the early part of our century. It was a disgrace in many families for a white girl to marry a Negro, but this girl had found something that was even worse.

FOLKLORE AND FOLKWAYS COLLECTED IN
WESTERN KENTUCKY

Glenda Martin

Rowan Co.

STORY

This is a true story that happened to the informants father when he was running for an office in Rowan County sometime around 1916. This man was up for re-election to the Rowan County Board of Education. A close neighbor of the candidate passed away on the Monday before election day on Tuesday. The candidate of course was concerned, and back in those days most everyone made their own coffins. Since the next day was election day, the candidate decided to do what he could on Monday and thus leave Tuesday free to work on his re-election. He and some more neighbors made the casket and he also helped to dig the grave. He also went to the home and 'sat up' as they called it that night with the deceased man. The next day he didn't go to the funeral and this made the deceased mans family very angry, some said they would not vote for him again for anything anytime, and other members of the family refused to speak to him during their lifetime. They said he had no respect for the dead and this was not the proper kind of man for an office. They also felt he put politics before the dead and this was wrong. I think this story shows how some people feel about politics and some of the customs the people have. They enjoyed politics and always voted but the dead had to come first. And also there is no quicker way to lose a friend than through an election.

This story goes back to an election held in Rowan County during the 1930's, it was for the office of county judge. John Jones was a candidate, he was the type of man who runs for every office in the county and never gets elected to any of them. The other candidate, Jim Smith, was widely known in the county and had held many county offices, in fact he was up for re-election.

Well the tide turned this election and Jones was elected County Judge of Rowan County. This meant that our ex judge had to go up Salt River. When he got there he found that all the hotels and rooming houses were full, there was not a room to be had anywhere. He was wondering around trying to find a room when he came upon this rundown shabby place, so he decided to try in there. He went inside and ask the clerk for a room. The clerk told him they were all filled up all out one room and that John Jones keeps it reserved the year round. Our Salt River candidate then said, " Well you can give the room to me beacuse they send me in his place."

THE BUYING OF VOTES

Usually the buying of votes goes on the night prior to the election, when the money or the whiskey is brought to the home. Many time your opponent has been there before you and you always try to be the last one there so you can beat the first offer. And also it is important to get them to the election grounds early in the day, before he starts on the whiskey. A typical scene at a home which we shall say has 5 votes to sell goes something like this. You never come right out and ask to buy their vote or ask them to sell, you sort of beat around the bush. The same person usually goes back time after time so it is sort of an agreement between the two.

"You know we are counting on you and your family voting our way tomorrow. You know ??? has always done right by you and helped you in any way he could."

"You can count on us, but it is such a job to get to the polls and the wife has a lot to do to get ready. There are so many thing she and the girls needs. They all three need new shoes."

"We know how you feel." And gives him \$16.00. This is \$4.00 a piece. (Womens Lic would be glad that in vote buying the woman gets paid just as much as the man.

I think the person who buys the vote is really the worst of the two. The going price for a vote is usually \$2-5.00. This applies to what one could call the lower class of people, the better class of people usually got from \$5-10-15.00. They got the higher price because they would say that they had to miss a day of work to vote and they couldn't afford to do this unless they got paid for it.

Whiskey was used widely in elections in the past in Rowan County, I can attest to the fact that whiskey is still used in elections in Rowan County as recent as the last election for county wide officers.

KENTUCKY AND FOLK LIFE COLLECTION
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Glenda Martin

There are usually two reason why whiskey is used in an election, one being you can get a man drunk and you can tell him how to vote, he won't mind too much if he is drunk; the other being if he is a little undecided and you know he has been talking to the people on the other side, you can get him drunk and he will tell you what the other side is doing if he knows. Whiskey is also used as sort of dressing on the cake, you have already given him money for his vote but to show him how much you appreciate him you can give him a half-pint of whiskey. This is also good insurance for the next election.

Glenda Martin

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THE CHAIN BALLOT

In days passed when the paper ballot was used it was easy to know how a person whose vote you had bought voted because you voted for him. There were always some extra ballots floating around, almost anyone who knew somebody could get a hold of them. The chain ballot was carried out like this:

When the person whose vote you had bought came upon the election grounds, they always managed to see the person who had the marked ballot. He could call them over when they first came or he could get to their car before they had time to get out. There were usually more than one working at each election house. The man who had the marked ballot would somehow slip the marked ballot to the person who was going in to vote, they felt that no one was seeing them but every one who worked in the election knew what was going on. When the voter got inside the election house, the clerk of the election would of course give him a ballot, he would go into the booth, take out his marked ballot and put back in his jacket the one the clerk had given him, and would deposit the marked one in the ballot box at the clerks desk. He would then take the unmarked ballot and give to the vote buyer on the outside and he would mark it and have it ready for the next vote seller. The buyer was in trouble if the seller failed to bring the blank ballot back to him. This would go on all day long or at least until all the sellers had voted.

Glenda Martin

(12)

COMMON BELIEFS

"Mrs. Manning said that it was a common belief in Rowan County that if Democrats had been in office for a long period of time and it rain on the next election date that the Republicans would win because the Democrats refused to go out in the rain. Mrs. Manning said that this couldn't be true."

Mrs. A. Y. Manning
609 Crestview
Morehead, Kentucky
November 11, 1971

TERMS

"Year Around-this is where a particular person in office plays politics all year. In other words he takes care of the opposite party as well as his own party to assure him the office in the next election."

"Chain Ballot-this is where a person bought ballots that were stamped thus making sure his candidate and party won."

Mr. A. Y. Manning
609 Crestview
Morehead, Kentucky
November 11, 1971

COMMON PRACTICE

"One of the traditions of Rowan County that Mr. Manning recalled was that of running a chain ballot. He can remember as far back as 1919 when he first came here that people voted by using paper ballots. He said there would be a fellow outside the court house buying votes. The county used stencil ballots and candidates' names would be on a table. The county clerk would give each person a sample ballot to go in the booth. The voter would put a sample ballot in the booth and bring out the stamped ballot and give it to the person buying votes. Once the stamped ballots were brought out they were passed out to the people waiting in line to vote. By doing this a politician was sure to win all the votes. Mr. Manning knew that this was true because he , in the past, has helped buy votes."

Mr. A. Y. Manning
609 Crestview
Morehead, Kentucky
November 11, 1971

COMMON PRACTICE

"Mrs. Manning said that one of the traditions was that of playing the people year around. She said that when she worked in the court house about 1949 that the county clerk would go out of his way to help the opposing party members so as to keep himself in office. She said that he would write letters to the relatives and friends, take them home, offer them help on the farm, such as an extra tractor, seeder, or so forth, and gave people some extra hog feed and so forth. She said the best example was Vern Olfrey, a Republican, who had been in office for years because he favored people. On election day in 1949 she can remember hearing some comments about him. One fellow said to another, "You know, it looks as if the county is going Democratic this time." The other fellow said that it may be true but there would be one Republican in office for sure: Vern Olfrey. She knew this to be true because she worked for him."

Mrs. A. Y. Manning
609 Cranstview
Morehead, Kentucky
November 11, 1971

JOKES

"Mr. Chumley told me that not long after he came to Rowan County he went to a local camp meeting. He figured the date to be during the summer of 1953. Mr. Chumley said that when the preacher got to the podium he started telling this joke. The people in Roean County take politics very seriously. There was this old fellow and he was feeling bad so he went to the doctor. The doctor said Uncle John you don't have long to live. The old fellow replied that he had one thing to do before he died. The doctor asked what that might be. The old fellow said that he wanted to go to court house and change his restration. Why is that the doctor said, you are a strong Republican. Uncle John replied that he would rather die one of them rather than one of us. Mr. Chumley said that at the time he thought the county was Democratic. He said the preacher was Emerson Coleoff."

Mr. Charles Chumley
Sherwood Forrest
Morehead, Kentucky
November 10, 1971



"In the year 1884, Cook Humphrey, a young man of twenty-five and a Republican, and Sam Goodan, a Democrat, were candidates for sheriff of Rowan County, which was ordinarily Democratic. The contest was very bitter, Gooden lived in Morehead and Humphrey lived on his fathers farm about seven miles from town. Humphrey was elected by a majority vote of twelve. On election day a man by the name of William Trumbo and a man by the name of Price quarreled, this quarrel ended in a fist fight; while the fight was in progress, John Martin, a son of Ben Martin, a well-to-do farmer, was struck in the face with a heavy instrument and one of his teeth was knocked out and his head badly bruised. He afterwards said that John Day and Floyd Tolliver struck him and knocked him down; when he got up he drew his pistol and the other two men also drew their pistols; in the battle which followed, Soloman Bradley, a middle-aged man with seven children who was standing near, was shot through the head with two bullets. The Martins claimed that John Day killed him and the Tollivers claimed that John Martin did it. Ad Scyremore, another man who was not connected with the trouble, was shot in the neck but was fatally wounded. It never was decided who did the shooting."

"Boone Logan came from a case in Lexington on election day and asked, "Who's running?" The answer was "Craig Tolliver." Boone said contemptuously, "I'll vote for the next hound dog that pisses against that tree yon." A hound came along, sniffed, lifted a leg, and trotted on. Boone Logan went in and voted for Gus Holbrook's hound dog, the only vote of 40 not for Tolliver."

Thomas Dougherty

"As has been stated Morehead was in the throes of an election, and under the barrels of Craig's pistols some fifty votes were registered in his favor as police magistrate. Not a soul had voted, up to that time, for the straw man who opposed him. Then came Boone Logan, nephew of Howard, to the polls.

"You're goin' to vote fo' Craig Tolliver, ain't yuh?" asked the keeper of the ballots.

"Vote for Craig Tolliver? I'd sooner vote for Hiram Cooper or the yellowest, meanest cur in Morehead. No sir, watch me mark this ballot." And when Craig Tolliver heard this he fumed. The Logans had affronted him! The Logans must pay!⁵

"In about four months after that Tolliver returned but everything remained very quiet for several months and when the time came to elect a police judge of Morehead, Craig said that he was now a peaceable man and a good quiet citizen and that people ought to encourage him in his good behavior by electing him police judge of Morehead and he Thereupon became a candidate for that position and he went out canvassing for votes with a Winchester rifle and in a short time thereafter all the other candidates with-
3
drew."

Kowan County

"At the election, Craig recieved about fifty votes and he was duly declared elected. On the day of the election Craig Tolliver was standing near the voting place when Boone Logan came up to vote; the officer of the election asked him if he wanted to vote for police judge; Logan asked him who were the candidates, and the officer said, Craig Tolliver was the only one and thereupon Logan said, "I will vote for _____," and he named the most worthless man in town. The election of the position of police judge gave him power to issue warrants and this led up to the worst crime which was committed by either side, and that was the killing of the two Logan boys which occurred about two weeks before Craig and his followers were finally settled with."

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Thomas Daugherty

Kowan Co.

"Why the Democrats will have you believe they are responsible for making creme sour so that you can make buttermilk. They claim the sun shines brightest in Kentucky because there are more Democrats than Republicans and that burly tobacco wouldn't bring enough to pay for the fertilizer if it wasn't for them. They claim they're responsible for the trees growing up and the water running down; for the fishes in the streams and the fowl in the air."

FOIKLORE AND FOIKLIFE COLLECTION
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Thomas Daugherty

Rowan Co.

"It is my understanding that all politicians must file an expense account within ten days after the election. Mine was as follows:

Claude Clayton's vote - \$1.50 in money and one-half pint of Golden Springs - total \$2.75

Judge Luther Bradley - one poke of Beechnut Chewing Tobacco - 12¢

Frank Laughlin - two Havana Cigars - 25¢

Sam Green - I promised to vote for him for county judge - \$.00

President Baird - first down payment on a hat - \$.00

Lee Stewert - tipp-off on a still, which was raided the day after election - \$.00

Ed Hall - five used parking tickets - \$5.50 (not paid)."¹

FOLKLORE AND FOLK-LIFE COLLECTION
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Thomas Daugherty

"The politicians are beginning to claim that they have done everything right and never done anything wrong in their lives. Mark my words, Harry Lee Waterfield (candidate for governor and peoples choice) will claim in his speeches that he is responsible for the bumper crop of strawberries produced in M^cCraken County. Its no wonder they had a million dollar crop. It used to be that they sold strawberries in the store by the quart . . . now it is so much each."⁶

"Why you can offer a Democrat a drink of Moonshine and if ~~its~~ good and brings an immediate tingle to the toes you'll hear him say: "Some good Democrat made that." But if it tastes like a mixture between coal oil and ether they'll come out with: "These damn Republicans don't even know how to make good whiskey."
5

WOMEN FOR WATER, 1963

The problem of an ample water supply had become great with the increase of population of the university and the city. The city at one time owned the water facility, but they sold it to the university. There was not enough water to supply both the university and Morehead.

Several ladies formed a coalition to relocate Morehead's water facility at Farmers, Kentucky. This organization was called "Women for Water." This movement turned into the major platform for the candidates for mayor and city council. One slogan for the election of the city council was:

"Vote for Four and No More"

A new water plant was the result of the women's coalition. Not only is there enough water for Morehead, but we sell water to the rural areas of Rowan and Bath Counties.

FOLKLORE AND CULTURE COLLECTION
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Thomas Daugherty

Date of birth:
December 14, 1920
Morehead, Rowan, Kentucky

Tale:

There was a man named Two-Finger Boone Williams who profited at election time. He bought votes for the Democrats. Meanwhile, the Republicans had been paying floaters, rather illiterate people, \$3 a vote. So, Boone pulled out \$5 bills and asked for \$2 change and told the people he was paying them more than the Republicans.

Winona Foster
P. C. Box 221,
Morehead
September 21, 1971

Age: Forties
Morehead, Rowan, Kentucky

Tale:

At the Rowan County Courthouse one day, there was man talking to a woman from Maryland about a man who was going to be hanged at the Courthouse soon because he didn't support his family. Well, the woman got excited in this uproar and ended up running a stoplight and running into something.

Winona Foster
P. O. Box 221, Morehead
September 21, 1971

Tale:

There was an incident in 1967 called the feud of the barbed-wire fence. There had been nothing quite like it in this part of Kentucky since the Hatfields and McCoys. There had never been any arguments in over 20 years between the Williams and Ingles about who owned the land until Ingle started putting up a new fence. Since that moment, almost all hope of a compromise had been eliminated by the bitterness the dispute had caused. About all that the two men agreed upon was that the land was at least for mountain farmland, but worthless. The feud was just over the principle involved.

Winona Foster
P. O. Box 221, Morehead
November 30, 1971

Date of Birth:
December 14, 1920
Morehead, Rowan, Kentucky

Common Belief:

Everyone is set in their own ways.

Winona Foster
P. O. Box 221, Morehead
September 21, 1971

Approximate age: 44 years
Morehead, Rowan, Kentucky

Common beliefs:

Judge Caldwell says that he would not use friends to get ahead.

He runs his office in an honest manner and believes in always being sober, in other words, no drinking in the home or at the office.

Politics is friendly with no violent moves.

Politicians look for jobs indirectly for their relatives.

If a politician does not want to admit his favoritism for another politician, the papers will print or someone will say that his father likes that person.

People vote honestly and go home.

Winona Foster
P. O. Box 221, Morehead
October 19, 1971

Mr. Bill Pierce
Date of birth: August
27, 1936
Morehead, Rowan, Kentucky

Common beliefs:

Many people who voted were either given money or alcohol to pay for votes, and this still happens today.

The Democrats and Republicans both have carriers who go out in the county and bring voters to the polls.

Politicians accept money, gifts, etc.; and those in office reward.

Winone Foster
P. O. Box 221
Morehead
November 9, 1971

Mr. Chenault James
Approximate age: 40 years
Morehead, Rowan, Kentucky

Common Beliefs:

Any close race is always won by someone stealing votes.

Winona Foster
P. O. Box 221, Morehead
November 30, 1971

Mr. James E. Clay
Date of birth: December
14, 1920
Morehead, Rowan, Kentucky

Song:

Happy Chandler's song to the tune of "Happy Days Are Here
Again."

The Democrat War Song to the tune of "Dixie."

Winona Foster
P. O. Box 221, Morehead
September 21, 1971

Poems:

There you'll be hanging to greet him,
when Jasper comes home with the win.
Nary a smile will he bear but
he'll be a winner all right.
Jasper's the last of the Logans. Hit's
reason to think that he'll beat.
Beat and beget all his opponents,
he'll have the result at his feet.

No, Sir, I'm not begrudging Jake should
have his lawful chance.
But God! ef thar was room for him
this County would be moved to France!

The road is where all the world passes by--
but there is still the hill.
People I tell you plain
elect me and I level that hill.

Winona Foster
P. O. Box 221
Morehead, Kentucky
November 30, 1971

Approximate age: 70 years
Morehead, Rowan, Kentucky

Words or terms:

"If elected, I will do _____"

Winona Foster
P. O. Box 221, Morehead
November 30, 1971

Mr. James E. Clay
Date of birth: December
14, 1920
Morehead, Rowan, Kentucky

Proverb:

A rainy day is a good day for the Democrats, and a clear
day is for the Republicans.

Winona Foster
P. O. Box 221, Morehead
September 21, 1971

Mr. CHESTER JAMES
Approximate age: 40 years
Morehead, Rowan, Kentucky

Proverb:

"Elect a winner."

"If you can't beat 'em, join 'em."

Winona Foster
P. O. Box 221, Morehead
November 30, 1971

Date of birth: December
14, 1920
Morehead, Rowan, Kentucky

Common Practices:

Candidates put out paraphernalia such as, pencils, bumper stickers, etc., before an election. They also make speeches at the courthouse and mingle with the people.

Winona Foster
P. O. Box 221
September 21, 1971

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Date of birth: August
27, 1936
Morehead, Rowan, Kentucky

Common Practices:

Politicians have tendencies towards weddings, funerals,
etc. for exposure to the public.

Greatest contribution is having roads improved.

Winona Foster
P. O. Box 221
Morehead
November 9, 1971

Approximate age: 40 years
Morehead, Rowan, Kentucky

Common Practices:

Prior to election time, there is courthouse speaking, political rallies, banquets, fish-frys, dances, etc.

Winona Foster
P. O. Box 221, Morehead
November 30, 1971

Date of birth: December
14, 1920
Morehead, Rowan, Kentucky

Objects of Material Culture:

The party symbol is used such as, the log cabin for the Republicans, the rooster for the Democrats, and the camel for the Prohibitions. Each city councilman adopts his own symbol.

Winona Foster
P. O. Box 221
September 21, 1971

Farmers and I am sure he claimed the spokesman position for the Democratic Party. Informant was in the position that his attendance was greatly desired at political gatherings and rallies and I am sure these meetings were a good source of political folklore. I was particularly impressed with the informant since he could retain many political traditions he had heard and was usually able to remember how and when he had first heard them. If all my informants had been as witty and cooperative as Mr. Perry my task would have been considerably easier.

Mr. Perry, my first informant told me some good political stories. He had heard this story shortly after he got back from the war and it was told to him by his grandfather. Story was something along this line;

"A man was running for circuit judge in the 1940's and he gave a lot of money to one of his campaign officials with which he was supposed to buy votes. Instead, the official took this money and bought a Cadillac. Since the candidate's name was Caudill, the car became known as a "Caudillac."

The second little political story concerned a race for county judge in Rowan County some years back. It is told along these lines;

"A preacher was running for county judge of

In another county judge race in the 1940s, many different things happened in the last few hours of the campaign. It is told something like this;

"A man was once in a tight county judge election. There was a man around Morehead who resembled this candidate. A day before the election the opposition bought a suit of clothes for this man. Next, they got him drunk and placed him in the back of a taxi and hauled him around the county. They stopped frequently and told everyone to come here and see their next county judge. It so happened that this poor fellow was so drunk he could not even drive his own car.

Actually, it was not even the read candidate."

Informant heard the above story the day after the election from many of the voters in the community. However, they did not know that the real candidate was not drunk in the taxi and on the previous day they had voted against him. This stunt, which the opposition had pulled resulted in the defeat of this candidate.

There is one political story I got from my first informant, of recent origin. It concerned a candidate for a Rowan County office in the last county election primary.

"A man was running for sheriff of Rowan County and he had had many posters made of himself

with a broom. Candidate claimed throughout the campaign that if elected he would use this broom to sweep the courthouse sparkling clean. However, he never got his chance at being a janitor because he ran a miserable third in the primary."

Mr. Perry saw the posters of this candidate with his broom and remembered hearing this tale in the last county election. This had no doubt been the first political race for this candidate and may be in part his reason for being photographed with a broom in his hand.

First informant now moves into the field of common-belief traditions of Rowan County. One of the best I have been able to attain, goes along something like this;

"There is a long established belief in Rowan County that the losers in an election go up Salt River to get forgiveness for voting wrong."

This common belief has been implemented after every election in Rowan County. This common belief is very old and no specific date can be fixed for its origin. Informant says he has even been up Salt River a few times himself.

Now I can tell everyone a joke which has been told in the Farmers vicinity after the recent gubernatorial race. It deals with one of the losers and his theoretical voyage up Salt River.

"After the 1971 gubernatorial election a strong Republican was asked when he had gotten back from up Salt River. He exclaimed that he had not been able to stay there long because the premises were so crowded and he had ran into a lot of friends coming and going there."

This joke Mr. Perry told me is of recent origin and it is just beginning to be told by people and will no doubt be more widespread in the future.

Another joke which is particularly well-known to the Farmers area deals with the GOP administration in Frankfort. It has been told like this;

"In the 1967 gubernatorial election the winning candidate promised new industry for the Farmers section of Rowan County. What this heavy industry became was a walnut huller which employed one man on a part-time basis. If this is so called industry we are going to need a lot more of it!"

This above joke was told after the first half of Mr. Nunn's term in Frankfort. Informant heard it from another Democrat and has been told very widely in this portion of Rowan County and will probably be more widespread in the future.

One last category of political traditions the informant was able to help me with concerned his definition of a precinct

chairman,

"A precinct chairman is an essential link in the political party because all elections are won or lost at the local level. A precinct chairmans duties consist of "selecting a county chairman, receiving notices on rallies and speeches and obtaining contributions". People of Rowan County regard the precinct chairman as the one to see on getting patronage and serves as the main link with the hierarchy of the party at the county level. This precinct chairman is elected by voice vote by all the registered voters of his party at their respective polling places."

people jokingly refer to the informant as the "mayor" or "sheriff" of Farmers. No doubt this is all for mere fun. Another reason I interviewed this individual is because many said he could help me immeasurably since he is always in the middle of informal discussions characteristic of this small rural community. I first thought Mr. Stevens could help me quite a bit but after the interview was completed I found out I had been partly incorrect. Informant claimed he had a hard time remembering the information I was seeking and such information seemed to come and go in spurts. I went through the same procedure with my second informant as I had with my first one.

Mr. Stevens contributed one story that has had a glorious past within the folklore of Rowan County. It is told frequently like this;

"Two old moonshiners were going to make moonshine for an upcoming election. One went to get water for the still and the other was to stay there with the still until he got back. Well, while the one was gone for the water the police arrived and arrested the other one, still and all, and took him to jail...the other moonshiner came to visit the one in jail and said "Doggone it, I always knew you were going to get into trouble with that still of yours!"

Informant heard this joke on a person-to-person basis and was told about it by his brother-in-law. However, the informant could not set a specific date of origin for the story but only that it has been told around the fireside at the country general store for many years.

Second informant has come up with some common beliefs held by the citizens of Rowan County.

"This common belief is that a vote seller and vote buyer are two of the most dishonorable creatures that breathe air."

Again the informant could not set a specific date of the origin of this belief but said that his grandfather had told him about this when he was a young boy. So I would probably estimate the date of this belief to be around the first decade of the twentieth century.

Another common belief exposed by Mr. Stevens goes something like this;

"If it is a clear day it is clear sailing for the Democrats but if it is a cloudy day, the next few days will be just as cloudy for the Democrats."

Informant like so many times before was unable to ascertain a specific date when he had first heard this common belief but he thinks it was first told some years after the turn of the century. Informant believes this common belief is

only partly true because it may hold true in some cases but be completely incorrect in another.

Next category my informant was able to help with concerned the traditional jokes that have been told and retold. The first joke was as follows;

"A county judge in Rowan County was once trying a woman for some offense. In the course of the events the woman became mad at the continual pounding of the gavel by the judge. Finally she said "I'll just knock you into the head with that pecker, (judge's gavel). The woman went through with her threat and it took the Rowan County sheriff to save our county judge."

This one particular joke above was spread very rapidly throughout Rowan County and informant said it was first told around the mid-1950's. One individual drew Mr. Stevens aside and related this joke to him.

Another joke told by the second informant is very, very, old and the probable date of origin was back in the late 1800's. Mr. Stevens' grandfather told him about it;

"Uncle Andy Thomas and Judge Cogswell got drunk and got down in a ragweed field. Just before a rain, lightning bugs went to flashing everywhere and Uncle Andy stuttered and said

"Judge where we at," and the Judge replied,
"Don't you see the lights, we are right in
the middle of Cincinnati."

name that might cause such reactions. End result of the interview was that Mr. Jones not only related some of the things of the past but even provided me with some things he had originated himself. However I did not get as much as I thought I would.

One of the stories I received from my third informant wound up something like this;

"One time a policeman in Morehead was running for magistrate or coroner. His opponent was placed on the ballot by some other group and this candidate was at the time serving in the army overseas. The candidate who was away in the army won* the election even though he was not even in Rowan County at the time. Every one thought the policeman was crazy anyway."

Informant said the above story originated in the late thirties or early forties. Mr. Jones heard about this after the election. No other version of this story has ever been passed down through the political traditions of Rowan County.

A second story or tale is the sole creation of the informant. This is very indicative of the imagination that this old man has. Since the informant is very active in telling such stories and tales it will no doubt in the future become more widespread. The story as related by Mr. Jones sounds something like this;

"One time while a man was hunting in the woods he discovered that a violent rainstorm was approaching. To get out of the rain, the individual got into a hollow log. When the rain was over the man found that he was unable to get out of the log. All a sudden he began to think of all the mean things he had done in his lifetime and in particular the times he had voted Republican, and then he suddenly felt so little that he just slipped out of the log."

This little story above is just an example of the wit of this man. I will now be one of the people to pass this story on and it will no doubt hold a glorious position within the oral political traditions of Rowan County particularly among followers of the Democratic Party. This story could have another version which would benefit the Republicans.

Another funny story which has very recently popped up in Rowan County deals with the November 2nd Gubernatorial election. Mr. Jones related the story to me as follows;

"In the recent election a very strong Republican who had been drinking excessively was at the polls trying to elicit votes for the Republican Party. This Republican was walking around the polls with an Emberton button on his shirt but someone had stuck a FORD-CARROLL bumper sticker on his back. Since the Republican did

not know it everyone was laughing at him. Another strong Republican who was standing nearby said "well it looks as if Bobby has switched over and now I may as well go home". Finally the Republican discovered the sticker and quickly tore it off and went off."

This one particular story above has become a commonplace among the residents of Farmers and it will just be a matter of time before it is spread all over the county. This type of story is particularly funny among the Democrats since this one Republican had claimed a victory for his party.

Another story related by the third informant dealt with a Democrat in a voting booth.

"Once a Democrat went to the polls to vote but had not made up his mind as to how he should vote. He went into the voting booth and looked straight at the rooster and finally decided to pull the lever under the rooster. It seems as if he hit the rooster lever too hard because it made a straight line of x's down through the whole ticket and the log cabin shuddered and the smoke just rolled out of the chimney."

This above story was first told around the 1960 presidential election. However I have not heard anyone else ever tell this story, but again it may only be a matter of time until

it becomes widespread.

Third informant was only able to contribute one more story to my cause and it originated after the five-cent sales tax was passed by the state legislature. Mr. Jones heard it from another man and this man did not know when it had really originated.

"After the five percent sales tax was passed in the legislature it seems as if Governor Nunn had to take the blame. One man remarked that it had been twenty-four years since Kentucky had had a Republican governor and now by gosh it would be twenty-four more!"

up to this point. Informant said she had been so busy in the last few days that she had not had the time to really think up anything of real significance. However what she did tell me was something I had not heard before...first hand observation.

Mrs. Elam started off the interview with a story which related to a past County Judge.

"It seems as if a past County Judge would come in every morning at 8:00 and open up the doors of the courthouse and his door in particular. State law he said, required him to open from 8 A.M. til 4 P.M. but no law required him to be in there."

This story occurred during the mid-1950's. Mrs. Elam did not hear this little episode from anyone but was one of the first to hear it from the County Judge himself. Again this was first-hand observation.

Second story my fourth informant related to me dealt with voting absentee in a hotly contested primary.

"At one time absentees were voted at the courthouse and an old man was brought in to vote absentee. It so happened he had a baby's bottle in his back pocket and in the course of events the bottle was turned upside down and the milk began to flow out. A man

standing nearby exclaimed "it hurt this man so much to vote for Chandler that he gave milk down"."

This little incident above was observed by Mrs. Elams' husband and he related it to his wife. This little story would not have been recovered had it not come from a public official who seemed to be in the thick of things. Informant of course has never heard any other version of this story. This event occurred during the hotly contested Combs-Chandler primary of 1959.

Next little story Mrs. Elam told me dealt with a floater, vote at a Haldeman precinct.

"An old lady who was a floater voter was standing around outside the polls but had not yet voted. The GOP had supposedly already bought the vote but she still had not voted. A Democrat who was standing near the polls told her to go in and mark a straight Democratic ballot or the two mean boys from the nearby ridge would kill her. Immediately she went into the polls and voted a straight Democratic ticket and even held it up for the Democrat to see."

Informant maintained that this little story occurred during the 1953 election and Mrs. Elam was later to hear about it from the Democratic official who had supposedly influenced the old woman.

Final contribution I was able to get from Mrs. Elam dealt again with absentee voting at the courthouse.

"In the 1959 primary a man was running around trying to get money from both the Democratic organization and the Republican organization for his absentee vote. By the time he had obtained money from both sides he went in and got his ballot but failed to mark it and placed the empty envelope in the ballot box. The county clerk notarized the ballot but was too busy to check to see if the ballot was actually in there. In the end neither side had been able to gain a vote."

with the best information I could have obtained from any other citizen of Rowan County regardless of who he is. I notified the informant about two weeks ahead of the interview about what I was looking for and the part he could play in helping me find such information.

One of the first stories Mr. McClain related to me was one that has been told statewide and therefore is part of Kentucky folklore.

"Doc Beauchamp or Beechem as he was commonly known was one of the great storytellers of modern day Kentucky. Doc claimed one of his major reasons for being such a strong Democrat was because his youngest son was a victim of the Hoover Depression. Always there seemed to be someone in the crowd who would ask how this came about..by falling out of a highchair? and Beauchamp would reply, "no, by falling out of a persimmon tree trying to get his breakfast."

This little story was told over and over again at Democratic rallies and has taken a position in the folklore of the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Doc Beauchamp just recently passed away in Logan County and Kentucky therefore lost a very colorful figure.

Another little tale commonly associated with Rowan County tradition deals with a dolorful circuit judge and his sidekick character. It has been told many times something like this;

"One of the most popular politicians of Rowan County was Bill Young who had been a state senator and circuit judge. A character who ran around with him told of their joint episode in Lexington. Judge Young and his sidekick had been attending a state political rally in Lexington, became intoxicated and as they were walking down the street they became disgusted with something that had happened at the rally. Judge Young grabbed up a brick and started to throw it through a store window. Then the other character knocked Judge Young down and took the brick away from him. Judge Young then asked, "why did you hit me?" and the character replied, "you're the only lawyer in this crowd and if I get in jail you can get me out but if you get in, I can't get you out."

This little story was told around 1925 and it was told very widely by the character who had been with Judge Young.

The next little story told by Mr. McClain dealt with an old

county doctor and his race for the County Judgeship.

"Dr. Evans was from Farmers and he went out of his way to doctor people, regardless of whether they were Democrats or Republicans or any money or not. This informant I have interviewed drove the Doc's car around and when they returned home at night the Doc would not have enough money to pay for the day's gas bill. So in 1924 Doc decided to enter the race for County Judge as a Democrat. On Tire Flat, was a strong Republican whose name was Jack McClurg and Doc Evans had doctored his whole family and Jack had never paid him a red cent. So Doc Evans had informant drive him to see Jack who was digging sassafras. Doc got out of the car and said, "Hi, Uncle Jack and Jack replied, "Hi Doc." Doc went on to tell Jack that he was running for County Judge and he would like to have his vote. Jack replied "if you are a Republican I will vote for you but if not I would vote for a yeller dog first." Informant said, "What do you say about that, Doc?" and Doc said, "Crank her up and let's go."

This funny story above occurred in 1924 election and the informant had the opportunity to be there when it actually happened.

When the informant was County Judge many little stories came to the surface and one of the most memorable has been told like this;

"There was a family in Rowan County and it was comprised of a widow and five or six qualified voters. I knew they were vote sellers and I sent them twenty dollars whenever I ran for County Judge and won. The girls and boys were always running afoul of the law and I got tired of their actions and finally put two of the boys in jail, for thirty days. The mother came into the courtroom and said "Judge you can't do that because I voted for you", and he replied "you give my twenty dollars back and I'll turn your boys loose."

This little story occurred during the informant's reign as County Judge in the 1950's.

The next little story deals with a man who ran for County Judge against a clique or a machine type of organization.

"In these mountain counties we have a County Attorney and County Judge and if two could cooperate they could form what is commonly known as a "clique" or "machine". All of these counties in the years leading up to the 1920's were run by a clique or machine. In Rowan County the clique was run by Caudills and Hogges. John Riley was a candidate for County

Judge against a Caudill. Riley did his electioneering on horseback and wound up winning by a majority. Some of the old heads in the County asked Riley what he attributed his big victory to and John said "Well I went out in the county and cussed the clique in power and when I got back to town I made the people there think I was the clique."

This little story was told by John Riley himself and he told it many times over himself because he remained a public official for something like fifteen years.

Another little story that Mr. McClain told me about concerned the character that had served as Judge Bill Young's sidekick. Again the character has another story following this one.

"Uncle Tom Barber had a habit of getting arrested about every two weeks for being drunk. One Monday, Uncle Tom was caught and fined. Four or five days later Tom was picked up again and Judge said, "Tom haven't you learned by now its expensive to be fined twice in one week?" Tom replied, "Judge you can't fine me again because this is the same drunk I was on when you fined me on Monday."

"Many of Tom's friends used to constantly tell him "Tom you're in bad trouble this time and need a lawyer." Tom would say, "I don't have the money for a lawyer and should instead hire some fee witnesses."

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The next little story deals with a halfway lawyer who specialized mainly in small misdemeanor cases. This story occurred in the early forties and was told by friends around the courthouse.

"An old fellow who was supposedly a lawyer used to around the jail house, look to see who was there. He had a special fee for misdemeanor cases and it was ten dollars for a straight case and twenty dollars if he would furnish the witnesses."

Probably the oldest story the informant remembered was the one which dealt with a man who was on the witness stand in court.

"An old fellow was a witness before the court in a horse stealing case. One attorney asked him if he knew the defendant and whether or not he saw the defendant on a certain day and what he was doing. Witness replied that he was riding a horse fourteen feet high. Other attorney jumped up and said "You mean fourteen hands high." Witness then asked the judge what he had said and Judge replied, "fourteen feet high." "Say it once, say it again, you are not going to catch me in a lie."

Informant heard this story around 1920 but its origin probably goes back to the late 1800's.

Final category which the fifth informant encountered in

seeking the oral political traditions of Rowan County was in the realm of words or terms. The informant was able to contribute two such traditions.

"A floater voter is one who continually sells his vote."

"A professional vote seller will stay away from the polls on election day and you will have to go look them up. They will pretend they are working and if they were to quit work to vote they would lose money and should be re-imbursed if they do so."