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Folklore Term Report

Raymond J. Krushinski

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Raymond J. Kuschinski

Folklore

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Term Report

An actual interview with
Mrs Ethel Mc Neils and
Miss Dorothy Eckert.

Interviewer: Raymond J. Kuschinski
for term report in Follore II.

Interviewees:

Mrs. Ethel McNeilis -

age 53, grade school education,
employment - housemother in nurses home.
Married, three sons, husband dead.
Very able conversationalist.

Miss Dorothy Eckert

age 40, high school education
employed at local department store, one
of eleven children, address 648 So.
Lane St. Jacksonville, Fla.

Place of interview. - Home of interviewer,
648 Ocean Ave. Lane Co. Address given by
Mrs. Raymond Kuschinski for the purpose
of getting material for report.

Folk Sayings and Beliefs

(1)

Good and Bad Luck

Miss Eckert: Carry a four leaf clover or a rabbit's foot is good luck.

Mrs. McNeilis agreed, and added that when you get up in the morning always put your right foot on the floor first and you will have good luck.

Miss Eckert: It is bad luck if while you are walking with someone to let a pole or tree come between you. And don't tell an out or it rains, if you can call that bad luck.

Mrs. McNeilis: She said it is bad luck to tell a spider but didn't say why, also it is bad luck to sew on Sundays.

If your nose itches you will be kissed - both women agreed on this one.

Miss Eckert added - if your nose itches you might also get a letter or something better.

Mrs. McNeil added - Well if your right ear burns someone is speaking evil about you.

Miss Eckert said "No, if the left ear itches someone is speaking evil and if its the right ear someone is speaking good of you."

Mrs. McNeil laughed when she started telling about a hand that itches. She said "If your hand itches rub it on wood and it will be good, rub it on your ass and it will come to pass". Miss Eckert said that when your right hand itches you will get some money.

On the subject of hair both agreed that a person who is red headed is either very bright or very dumb.

Mrs. McNeil said that a person will become gray at an early age if he is weaned while snow is on the ground. Miss Eckert said she didn't know anything about that.

On the subject of freckles Mrs. Mrs. Nelson said if a person has freckles just wash their face with a wet baby diaper. She said not one wet from washing either.

Miss Ebert - If you have freckles you can get rid of them by washing your face with dew early in the morning. She said she knows this works because she did it herself, she said they left her face and appeared on her arms. At this point I asked her why she didn't wash her arms in the same manner. Her reason was that she was afraid they would appear on her face again.

The only explanation for the freckles was that if it rains on a baby before it is a year old they will have them. Both women agreed on this and Miss Ebert said if you let a baby get a sunburn the first summer after it is born it will have freckles.

Both women agreed that the babies that are born in the winter months will be more intelligent than those born in the hot weather.

Mrs. McNeil said that if you kiss a baby on the mouth before it has teeth it will teethe hard.

Miss Ebert said "a baby who gets a lot of kisses in early life, will get very few when he grows up." Also a baby born on the 13th of the month will be unlucky.

Mrs. McNeil said If you want to play a dirty trick on a newly wedded couple you should take a newly born baby to their house before you take it anyplace else, then the newly married couple will soon have a shield of their own.

A child's growth will be stunted if you step over him while he is lying on the floor, also if the child crawls through a man's legs. Both women agreed on this.

Mrs. Mc Melie added that if you don't want a child to be left handed he should be nursed the first time at the right breast.

At this point Miss Eckert took notice to my sons whistling and she said it reminded her of when she went to school, she had to pass the home of an old lady and one day she was whistling while she was walking by the house. The old lady was at the door and she called to Miss Eckert and she shouldn't whistle because it was bad luck, she said "Whistling girls and crawling hens come to a bad end."

Mrs. Mc Melie said she remembered a saying for a young bride. For good luck in marriage a bride should wear something old and something new, something borrowed and something blue on her wedding day.

Folk Medicine

(6)

How to remove freckles - Early in the morning wash your face with dew from the grass, also by washing your face with the dew from a tombstone. Both women agreed on this.

How can you remove warts - Miss Echeat said, "Just rub the wart with a potato and put it under a rain spout;" Mrs. McNeil said, "Rub the wart on a corpse and when the corpse decays the wart will go away."

Questionnaire -

- 1 Do you know of any saying that has to do with good or bad luck?
- 2 Do you know any sayings about different parts of the body - such as, if your nose itches you are going to be kissed or something?
- 3 How about when your hand itches?
- 4 Do you know any sayings about hair?
- 5 Do you know any sayings about freckles on a person's face?
- 6 Now we know how to get rid of freckles but do you know how you got them in the first place?
- 7 While we're on the subject of babies do you know any sayings about them?
- 8 Do you know anything about the babies growth?

Time passed so rapidly as we talked that the women were sorry they couldn't stay any longer but promised to visit again.

RJK.