

The following article was sent to me by Nancy Besier, Friend of Esmont and niece of Nellie Deane. The Deans lived in the house at the corner of Esmont Road and Boatwright Lane. We knew Nellie as “Aunt Toots” and her husband as “Uncle Frank.” Their daughter, Alva, her husband Carrington Hamner and son John, also lived there.

I do not remember “Tweedie;” don’t know how I could have missed knowing such a character. Enjoy the story.

Peggy Purvis Denby

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Circa Early 1950s

By Emma Frances Baber

“Tweedie Is Ruler In Esmont Home”

Tweedie may only be a little bobwhite but for the five years of his lifetime he has been a king in the home of Mrs. F.L. Deane and her family of Esmont.

Like Topsy, Tweedie just grew. Where he came from no one knows but he made his appearance June 22 five years ago when, as a little ball of fluff, he rolled to the feet of Mrs. Deane’s grandson, John Hamner, who was swinging in the yard with a playmate.

The amazed youngsters picked up the newly hatched bird and took him to Mrs. Deane. She and the boys searched the neighborhood looking for the bird’s parents. Neither birds nor nests were found, and mystery has remained as to how the bird came to be in the yard.



HOUSEHOLD FIXTURE — Tweedie, the tame bobwhite, settles on the shoulder of Mrs. F. L. Deane of Esmont and takes a peek out the window. Tweedie has ruled the Deane household for five years.
—Emma Frances Baber photo.

With improvised instruments and an eye dropper, Mrs. Deane fed and watered the tiny bird. It grew to maturity adapting itself completely to the household of the Deanes. He now weighs about pound.

He wanders at will about the house, twittering and calling "bobwhite" the year round. A visitor is often surprised by a shrill call of "bobwhite" from under a chair. He has no fear of mankind. A neighbor kindly said to him, "That bird is the darndest thing."

Tweedie has no desire for the wildlife. He follows Mrs. Deane into the garden, scratches for bugs and worms, eats berries and seeds, but dutifully follows her to the house when she has completed her gardening.

Tweedie had a mate for two years. He built the nest, guarded the mother bird on the nest, and fed the family.

At heart he is a bachelor and a "lone wolf of birdland." He prefers people to birds and the comforts of a man's home to the snares and cares of the wild. He stays free in the house and the Deanes have no fear that he will ever wander away.

Tweedie has adopted to man's food. He will eat anything offered to him and loves to eat from any plate on the table. He flies with glee to Carrington Hamner, Mrs. Deane's son-in-law, to get a sip of beer from his glass. After which he settles down in a corner for a nap. His main food however is parakeet seeds.

Tweedie perches on tables, chairs, bedposts, or on any member of the family. He sleeps in Mrs. Deane's room. When he gets cold, he flies to her pillow and nestles in the hollow of her neck, snug and warm until morning.

Tweedie likes John. They play together and fight together. When John teases him, Tweedie usually leaves marks on John which last for several days. Tweedie is no softie as John can testify.

As a guard Tweedie shows his colors. When a stranger approaches, Tweedie ruffles his brown flecked feathers, quarrels with a guttural sound and regally preens himself for an attack. If he likes the stranger, he will fly to him and chatter gently.