

Friday, the Thirteenth!

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat
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8 9 10 11 12 13
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21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28
29 30 31



By ELMO SCOTT WATSON
NOTHING disastrous happens to you on Friday, August 13? If it didn't and you are superstitious, you can take heart, for you're probably safe for some time to come. For August of this year is the only month which had in it that supposedly came of bad luck and it won't occur again until next year. November, 1926, has a Saturday, the thirteenth—just missed by one day, you see. But there won't be another Friday, the thirteenth, until May, 1927.

Just why should Friday, the thirteenth, be a day of ill omen? Perhaps for the reason that individually Friday and thirteen are feared by the superstitious, and when you combine the two—
Friday itself, whether it falls on the thirteenth or not, they consider the Jonah-day of the seven in the week. This is believed to be due to the fact that Christ was crucified on a Friday. At least that is the popularly accepted reason for the fear of it. So the superstitious person would never think of beginning a journey or any important undertaking on Friday, lest the jinx of that evil day bring disaster before the journey or undertaking be completed.

How it Started.
As for the sinister significance of thirteen, there seems to be two traditions. In Biblical times the Hebrew word for "thirteen" was identified with the word for "death." In Norse mythology, too, the number is put under a curse, for there is a tradition that the sun god Baldr had to die because there were thirteen gods in Valhalla, and that could not be tolerated. Whatever the reason, the fear of thirteen still exists among many persons who become most uncomfortable if they find that there are thirteen people at a dinner party or some such affair. They wouldn't think of occupying berth No. 13 in a pullman car or accepting license tag No. 13 for their automobile. In fact, they just don't want to have anything whatsoever to do with that combination of digits—a one before a three.

Despite all this superstition about Friday and thirteen, a study of American history will reveal that singly or together they have not been particularly unlucky. On the contrary, they seem to have been somewhat fortuitous in the history of this nation. Consider these facts in relation to thirteen:
There were thirteen original colonies.
The American flag has thirteen stripes on it and at one time it also had thirteen stars.
During the War of 1812 a combined British land and naval force attacked Fort Mifflin near Baltimore, Md. Had the attack been successful, the United States would have been "cut in two" and England might have won the war then and there. But, if you remember the incident, "at the dawn's early light," an American prisoner on one of the British ships looked anxiously toward Fort Mifflin and saw "that our flag was still there." So Francis Scott Key sat himself down and wrote "The Star-Spangled Banner." That was on September 13, 1813—two thirteens in that date, you



see—no, three! Add up the digits in the year, 1813—one and eight are nine and one and three are thirteen!

There are thirteen letters in the national motto, "E Pluribus Unum." The eagle which appears in the escutcheon of the great seal of the country has thirteen feathers in each wing.

It looked pretty dark for the cause of the American Revolution until France decided to come to the aid of the rebellious colonies. That took place on June 13, 1778.
The cornerstone of the White House was laid on October 13, 1792.
The Northwest Territory was organized on July 13, 1787.
And those are only a few of the dates or ways in which thirteen figures in American history.

As to Friday—
Now as to this evil day of Friday and its opportunities for bringing bad luck to our country:
Go way back to the year 1492. At two o'clock in the morning a certain Rodrigo de Triana, a sailor, rushed up to his captain, one Christopher Columbus, and excitedly pointed toward the west. "Land!" arose the cry on the Santa Maria. And that was on Friday, October 12. Incidentally, Columbus had set sail for the unknown on a Friday.

Four years later, John Cabot appears at the court of Henry VII of England. The king hands him a commission to explore the new land which Columbus has discovered, which Cabot proceeds to do. His explorations throw much fresh light on the regions of the New world, and they give the English a claim on lands in this continent. That commission was dated March 6, 1496, and it was a Friday.

On Friday, September 11, 1900, Henry Hudson in his brave little ship, the Half Moon, rounded the tip of an island and sailed up the river which now bears his name. All of which led to one of the most remarkable real estate deals in history. For that island was later named Manhattan, and the Dutch bought it from the Indians for the magnificent sum of \$24. If you happen to own some real estate up that particular island now, don't offer it for sale at \$24 a square inch. Some one might take you up on it quick!

History does not record whether or not the Pilgrims were superstitious—that is, aside from their belief in witches and such-like. Individually, they may have been. But collectively,

they weren't. For they actually set forth from Southampton on a Friday—August 21, 1620. So the next time you hesitate to start a motor or railroad trip on Friday, remember—not the Maine—but the Mayflower. It wasn't wrecked.

American history is full of "ifs." If a little boy hadn't been born on a Virginia plantation on February 22, 1732, the Revolution might have had a very different ending. For every one will admit that George Washington had a great deal to do with bringing that war to a successful conclusion. Of course, George Washington couldn't choose the day of the week when he was to make his appearance on earth, but the fact remains that February 22, 1732, came on a Friday.

Some Lucky Fridays.
The Revolution is full of lucky Fridays. For instance, Bunker Hill was seized and fortified on Friday, June 10, 1775. Friday, October 17, 1777, witnessed the surrender of General Burgoyne at Saratoga, the first really great American victory and the culmination of one of the decisive battles of the world. Benedict Arnold isn't usually looked upon as an individual America was lucky to have. But the fact that his treason was discovered on Friday, September 22, 1780, certainly was lucky for the American cause. And just to make this "Friday luck" in the Revolution complete, remember that on Friday, October 19, 1781, a British army under Lord Cornwallis marched out of Yorktown, Va., and laid down its arms. Another lucky Friday for George Washington and a lucky one for America, for the surrender of Cornwallis meant the end of the struggle for independence.

It isn't until you come down to the time of the World War, however, that Friday presents indisputable evidence that Friday, the thirteenth, is not at all a double jinx for these United States. There's a man named John J. Pershing who is said to have had a great deal to do with ending the war. A superstitious person wouldn't have given John J. much chance for living very long, not to mention becoming internationally famous. For he was born on Friday, the thirteenth!

Remember St. Mihiel and the battle that an American army fought there? It took place on Friday, the thirteenth. Enough? Do you still believe that Friday is usually an unlucky day, that thirteen is certain to be an unlucky number, and that Friday, the thirteenth, is the double-distilled essence of catastrophe?

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Those Dear Girls

"Tell me just what sort of a man your fiance is, Clara."

"Oh, he's everything that's nice."

"I'm so glad. You know I've always said that people should marry their opposites."

An intellectual man admires a foolish woman because she admires him.

Had Big Banker on Anxious Seat

Talking about financiers being tackled when undressed, the writer was walking out of the International banking house of Kuhn, Loeb & Co. in company with Jacob H. Schiff one afternoon, when a poorly dressed, rough-looking six-footer brusquely stepped in front of the veteran banker and, in deep voice, asked, "Are you Jacob Schiff?"

Mr. Schiff looked at the man and then at the writer. "Are you Jacob Schiff?" the intruder again demanded. "If I were Mr. Schiff, what of it?" asked Mr. Schiff.

"Are you Mr. Schiff?" the fellow repeated, more gruffly than before.

The aged banker didn't know what to say or do. He started to walk away.

The six-footer grabbed him by the hand. "I think you are Jacob Schiff," he said, "and, by —, I want to tell you that you are all right."

Mr. Schiff, manifestly relieved, shook hands and smiled. "I am glad he feels that way," he remarked when the man had gone.—B. C. Forbes in Forbes Magazine.

Sound Waves

The bureau of standards says there are two methods by which sound waves may be neutralized, namely, by interference two waves are combined in such a way as to produce silence. It is necessary in doing this to have both sources of sound coupled in some way. This method, however, could not be used to neutralize a sound the source of which is not under control. The other method of neutralizing sound waves, by absorption, is simply a question of interposing suitable screens of sound-absorbing material. Hair felt is the best sound deadener so far discovered.

Family Affair

A retired banker of Indianapolis, who had nine brothers, recently told a company of friends about a wonderful photograph of himself taken with a silk waistcoat on. One day he brought down ten photographs, each brother wearing a flashy silk waistcoat, all taken many years ago.

"You must have had money in your youth, to wear clothing like that," said one of his friends.

"Nope," said the former banker, "that's the same vest on all of us."—Indianapolis News.

New Mineral Discoveries

Ludovico Dall'erno, an engineer in Italy, is said to have discovered two new minerals containing silver, gold and platinum in a colossal state. He named them "dall'ernite" and "aurorogumite." The minerals, he says, are abundant in Italy, and he can produce from them at a reasonable cost between 1 and 2 per cent of gold, 25 per cent silver and a considerable amount of platinum.

A Needed Invention

"He's a great inventor."

"What's he working on now?"

"A noiseless firecracker."

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Riveting Hammer Has Electrical Competitor

Is the voice of the riveting hammer to be still? For years it has ranked close to the flier's cough as "the great American sound," but now a new method of fabricating steel frames is rising. Electric welding which erects the skeleton of a building of many members melted into one piece instead of as a collection of beams riveted together, is looming.

A two-story garage of this type has been built in Canton, Ohio, and now contracts have been let in Pittsburgh, Pa., for two five-story buildings—the first in the world whose members and joints have been designed especially for electric welding. The speed of construction is far greater than by the well-known catch-hot-rivets-in-a-bucket-and-hammer-'em-home method, and the cost is estimated to be less.

Monster Electric Sign

The largest electric sign in the world, on Steeplechase pier at Atlantic City, N. J., advertising a brand of cigarettes, is 25 feet long and 55 feet high. It contains 25,000 lamps, said to be more than double the number of lamps used in any other sign. Fourteen changes of colors flood across its ornate designs during the 75 seconds of each complete cycle.

There is frequently more power in a woman's tears than in a man's argument.

Keep in Trim!

Good Elimination Is Essential to Good Health.

THE kidneys are the blood filters. If they fail to function properly there is apt to be a retention of toxic poisons in the blood. A dull, languid feeling and, sometimes, toxic backaches, headaches, and dizziness are symptoms of this condition. Further evidence of improper kidney function is often found in burning or scanty passage of secretions. Each year more and more people are learning the value of Doan's Pills, a stimulant diuretic, in this condition. Scarcely a nook or hamlet anywhere but has many enthusiastic users. Ask your neighbor.

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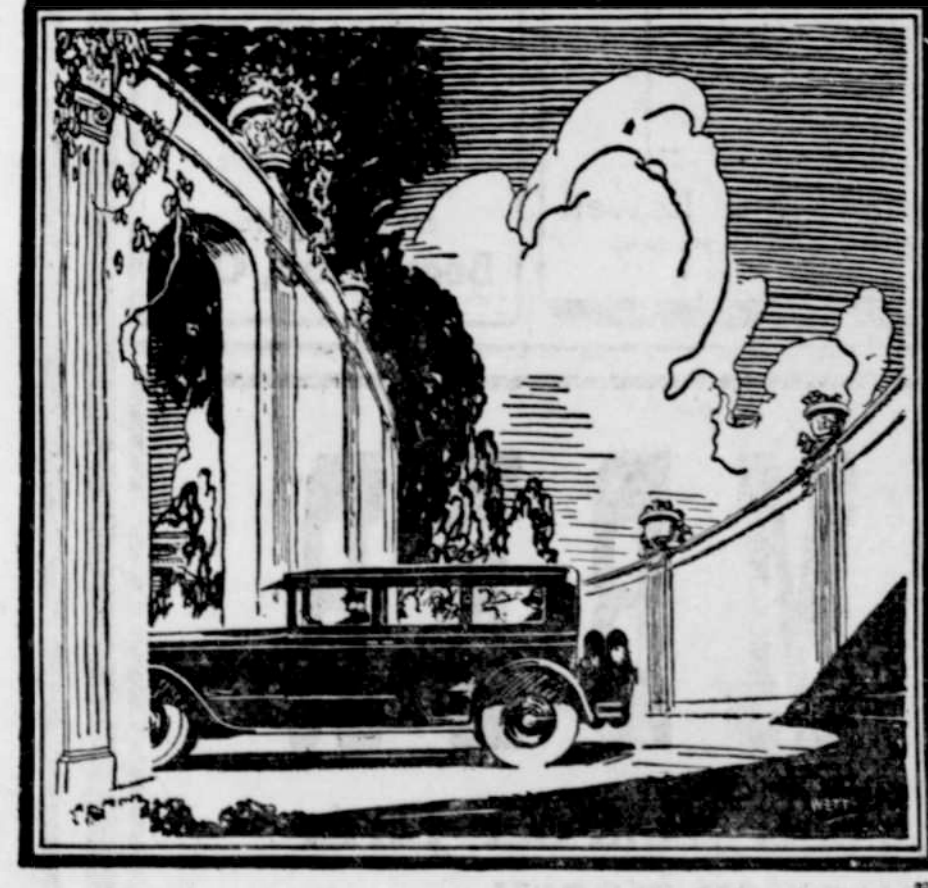
"Tiffin" in America

An English trade journal broadcasts the information that sales of Indian tea had increased in the United States by 3,000,000 pounds in 1924. In many of the large business houses and banks the four o'clock cup of tea has become a part of the office routine.

As much of heaven is visible as we have eyes to see.—Winter.

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Insect "Music"

There is no insect that possesses vocal organs. The members of this tremendous orchestra are mostly from three families of the great Orthoptera; the short-horned grasshoppers, or true locusts; the long-horned grasshoppers and the crickets. With the crickets the sound is produced by rubbing or rapidly vibrating the upper pair of wings against the lower pair. Some of the grasshoppers we might speak of

as almost true violinists, their forewing constituting the violin and the leg the bow. The latter is so veined and grooved as somewhat to resemble a minute file, and by placing this against the edge of the former and rubbing it up and down with greater or less rapidity various degrees and kinds of "music" are produced by the several species.

Glass Roofs to Cut Coal

Heating engineers have discovered new possibilities in sunlight as a

means of heating the home, and are experimenting with the feasibility of building glass roofs.

By providing houses with glass roofs, properly insulated, it is believed that great quantities of fuel can be saved during the winter months.

Doubters of the theory are referred to the sunny bay window of the average house on a winter day, where the sun works without scientific assistance.

Jonah originated the fish story.

Cornell Snakes Killed

The collection of live snakes in the zoology department at Cornell University have been killed and stuffed. After a Texas diamond-back rattlesnake had bitten Leonard Spear, the faculty decided that the snakes were too dangerous to keep in the laboratory alive. The question arose whether the serpents should be sent to the New York zoological park or be killed and stuffed for the university museum, and the latter solution of the problem was adopted.

Vacationists, Take Notice

I love people and want them to have vacations in the wilds, but I wish they would not show me their camp photographs. The sight of six or eight muskellunge and three or four fat tarpons hung up to dry makes no impression upon me and takes up my time. It also causes me to lie in an undertone. I see nothing interesting about pictures of middle-aged fat men in their fur coats and wearing

white duck hats with green isinglass brims. If one part of the population does not object to the other part's going to the northern lakes for a bear-hunting contest the parties of the second part should not be permitted to carry their photographic prints to the office when they get back.—Kansas City Star.

No Pretension in Nature

Where there is much pretension, much has been borrowed; nature never pretends.—Lavater.