

"The Good Old Days"



"THE DANCE AFTER THE HUSKING."—From the Pageant of America, Courtesy Yale University Press

Good Old Days

- Euchre.
- Bustles.
- Bartenders.
- Money Musk.
- Rag Carpets.
- Sleigh Bells.
- Frozen Pumps.
- Fly Blankets.
- Shaving Mugs.
- Beau Catchers.
- Quilting Bees.
- Moustache Cups.
- The Quadrille.
- Lively Stables.
- Oyster Suppers.
- The Schottische.
- Home Baked Bread.
- Bull-in-the-Ring.
- John L. Sullivan.
- White Underskirts.
- Five-Cent See-gars.
- McGuffey's Readers.
- Soapstone Bed Warmers.
- Red Flannel Underwear.
- Torchlight Processions.
- Muzzleloading Shotguns.
- Whiskers Way Down Here.

-All Gone Forever

By ELMO SCOTT WATSON

THE Old Timer shook his head sadly as he read the above item in his home town paper the other day. "Ah," he sighed, "if they were the only things that this jazz age had wiped out! But they aren't. Why, I could add several dozen more to that bunch."

So he sat down with pencil and paper and this is the list he compiled: Cigar store Indians, hitching racks on Main street, woodpiles, yoke of oxen, rail fences, farm peddlers, dressmakers, copper-toed boots, iron hitching posts topped by a horse's head with a ring in the mouth, highwheel bicycles, toll gates, real corn bread (made without sugar in it), bootjacks, homemade soap, home-butchered pork, photograph albums, pillow shams, stone churns, whatnots, balloon ascensions, rain barrels, autograph albums, coffee mills, coal oil lamps and literary societies.

"Oh, it can't be as bad as all that," sympathetically remarked a crony to whom he showed his collection. "There must be a few of those left somewhere in the United States."

"Not many, not many!" mourned the Old Timer. "They talk about the 'vanishing American.' What about the vanishing American institutions like some of these? Why, there's scarcely a day goes by that I don't read in the papers about the passing of something or other that I knew when I was a boy. Just look at these!"

The first was a clipping from the Boston Globe which said:

The old-fashioned dressmaker who used to come to your home and sew by the day is a disappearing species. A growing per cent of modern women are making their own clothes, according to those who sell patterns, while the stores with their inexpensive ready-made frocks are clothing the woman who "just can't sew a stitch."

Result No. 1—The enterprising dressmaker opens an artistic soft-lighted

salon in a part of her home and becomes a modiste.

Result No. 2—The regulation seamstress fades out of the picture. She can't get business in a community in which nearly every woman sews her own seams.

Time was, when mother called up Miss Mae or Miss Jenny, she came early and bustled rompers and fitted sleeves all day long for \$2.50. If she had a knack for designing and tone, she got \$3, luncheon and dinner included.

Today the customer goes to the dressmaker. A white-capped maid asks, "What is the name, please," and promises an appointment with madam at such and such a time. The dress, or more properly gowns will cost anywhere from \$65 to \$150 for the designing and making. The price of the material is extra.

Eve's term "dressmaker" is passe. She is a "designer of gowns," a "me'ete," a "madam."

Under a Kansas City (Mo.) date line appeared this item, which declared that

Back in the days when Ward McAllister's "400" was the only recognized social register in the East, the Middle West had its own way of identifying the socially elect. Strangely enough, its passing has been almost unmarked.

In the so-called nifty nineties the register of eligible males in most Middle Western towns was to be found on the carefully guarded shelves of tonsorial emporiums. Here, row on row, sat the private shaving mugs of the town's prominent, and across each was the owner's name, usually in elaborate script. But now, like Ward McAllister's list, the private mugs are passing. New fandangoes which eliminate the shaving mug altogether have come into their own.

Some Kansas City barbers blame women's invasion of the shops. Others declare that masculine patrons are not as particular now and do not always visit the same shop as they were wont to do when business was transacted in more leisurely fashion. Still others said the need for the mugs had passed; that they came into being as the result of some one's belief they would be more sanitary. In a few small towns the private mugs still survive, but in the main they are gone.

Exhibit C was from the Cleveland Plain Dealer. It said:

The old-time traveling merchant, who peddled a small line of merchandise from farm to farm, has disappeared in this section.

The development of swift modes of transportation, the extension of means of communication and the coming of improved highways have made obsolete the old traveling stores, but their memory lingers. For, in the old days, the peddler or huckster was a vital part of farm life.

The sparsely settled localities, the long distances between stores and the long periods of bad roads each year made the opportunity for him. The people as a whole could not conveniently reach him, but he could take his store on wheels and go to them. That was the secret of the success in the whole undertaking.

"And that's the way it is everywhere," declared the Old Timer. "I tell you the fellow who wrote that book about 'No More Parades' was right. Here's a piece from the Christian Science Monitor that says:

American streets seldom resound in these busy and practical times to the ta-ra-ra and boom-boom of the old-

fashioned parade. Small boys no longer throng the curbs to behold the bandmaster prancing before his trusty men, blowing a brazen blast fit to burst their bright horns. Who could forget that dearest image of the young, wearing his big bearskin shako, held in place by a silver chain beneath his chin? Or who could forget, for that matter, his short blue coat buttoned by means of gold frogs, a dark contrast to his tight red pants?

Where is the glistening baton that once whirled above his head like a shining aura? Who that has seen him throw it on high cannot still recall the gasp of assembled boyhood as it returned to his left hand? Generations of boys have broken windows uncounted practicing that trick with broom handles.

The truth must be told. America, as a nation, has lost the art of parading. The bandmaster of old has gone to join the neglected images, though he yet endures in the pantheon of heroes that used to be. Americans of yesterday were the greatest paraders of all times, rallying to the sound of a drum and the lure of a uniform with the instinct of a martial people. And what man has known glory in fuller measure than he who marched between lines of admiring faces while fair women and bright-eyed youth did homage?

The Old Timer next exhibited a clipping from the Salem (Mass.) News which found the passing of one institution the cause for a bit of "viewing with alarm" because

In these days of power saws and new ways of heating and cooking, the majority of boys are not getting the fine exercise with the sawhorse and the bucksaw that their fathers used to obtain.

About this time, as the old almanac says, it formerly was customary for the old man gently but firmly to steer his son out to the wood-pile and suggest that it was his duty to do so. It was a fine physical exercise and good moral discipline. Boys trained to cut up a woodpile usually made good. They raised industrious families and had a pretty good time through it all.

Another was from the Toronto Globe in which Arthur S. Bourinot sang this miserere for

THE OLD RAIL FENCE

Fast disappearing emblem of old days
When man first trod the frontier wilderness
Sowing the seed which later grew to dress
The ax-released land, with miles of sunlight maize.
Along haphazard windings, zig-zag ways,
In April bluebirds flew, all azure plumed,
Beside the lowest logs the blood-root bloomed
Unconscious of the brilliant noontide blaze.

But now the rails lie rotting in the grass
Or feed the fires of chill October eves;
Of former landscapes progress only leaves
A vestige which eventually will pass.
Thus gradually the old time glamour fades
And fading dies, as winds through forest glades.

"And I could show you dozens more just like these," concluded the Old Timer, "but I got to get home now. Station WEEP is broadcasting grand opsy tonight and I want to tune in on it."

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Covered Wagon Pioneer Quickly Restored to Health

Was So Weak Could Scarcely Use Arms or Legs. Sacramento Resident a Victim of "Flu," Loses Weight and Vitality. Finds Long-Sought Relief. Strength Restored. Praises Tanlac.

Pioneer blood flows in the veins of Frank Rikert, Box 1035, R. R. 10, Sacramento, Calif., a prominent stockman who trekked over the rough, hazardous trails from Illinois in the early sixties. But even his brawn, muscle and splendid health broke under the strain of modern living. "Flu" left its mark and threatened his life.

"I didn't care whether I lived or died, I felt so badly," said Mr. Rikert, "when I began taking Tanlac. My strength had vanished, sapped by the 'Flu.' My arms and legs were so weak that they were almost useless. I couldn't even turn over in bed without help, so completely undermined was my strength and vitality.

"One night my wife saw the Tanlac advertisement in the paper and urged me to try it. I bought a bottle and started taking it, and I felt better right off. In a few weeks I was able to do all my work. Not only did my weakness disappear, but I actually gained twenty pounds, and I have felt fine ever since.

"Yes, sir, I firmly believe that Tanlac saved my life. Naturally, I'm so enthusiastic about Tanlac I am telling all my friends it's a great medicine

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