

Buried Treasure

by Pinkney Gage



Decorated Cup Plates Recall Bad Manners

Cup plates came into existence because our ancestors preferred to drink tea from a saucer rather than a cup — hence the saying "a dish of tea."

Tea was drunk from a saucer because early Americans were too impatient to wait until they could drink it from a cup. They wanted it served almost boiling hot, and they didn't want to let it cool off slowly. So they spilled it into the saucer and sipped it awkwardly from the edge, thus saving themselves several seconds.

Meanwhile, what to do with the cup? To set it down on the table might mar the surface or at least stain the tablecloth. Quite aware of this, thoughtful hostesses provided additional plates, but the plates were too large. And so presently, alert porcelain and glassware makers started to turn out little plates designed solely to do the saucer's original job. They were cup holders or cup plates.

Since cup plates had only one task to fill, and a very light one at that, the manufacturers decided they should be an adornment to the table

and really let themselves go. Some, of course, are relatively simple in design, but the majority are ornate. Stars, flowers, arabesques, an almost infinite variety of figures, are found on the little plates. So many that it wasn't too long before the makers realized that still another purpose could be served — that of honoring public figures.

And so the faces of great men of the time are occasionally found on the plates — like that of Washington who, while talking to Thomas Jefferson, pounded home need of having a Senate as well as a House by illustrating his argument with a question about Jefferson's table manners.

"Why do you pour your tea in the saucer, Jefferson," he asked.

"To cool it, of course."

"And that is why we need the Senate — too cool the hot ideas of the House," Washington answered.

INTEREST BEARING NOTES ISSUED DURING CIVIL WAR

If you ever come across any old currency and there happens to be one of the U. S. "Interest bearing notes" among the bills, you have made a rare find.

In fact, some of these notes are so rare as to be virtually priceless, since only a few are known to exist outside the Treasury.

An interest bearing note is merely a greenback on which it is stated that the Government will pay interest to the holder at intervals of six months to three years. They were issued during the Civil War when the nation was in a financial crisis. Their purpose was to induce the people to keep the money in circulation rather than exchange it for coin. The interest offered ranged from five per cent on the one-and-two-year notes to better than seven for the three-year variety.

In appearance, the notes looked much like the other greenbacks of the time. They were large, about seven and a half by four and a quarter

inches. They were printed in black and green ink.

On the face of the \$10 note, was a bust of Salmon P. Chase, a brilliant lawyer and one of the top officials in Lincoln's Administration, who served as Secretary of the Treasury. In the center was the traditional American eagle. On the right was a classic female figure in an oval frame. The offer of interest and the dates it would be paid were given in a scroll printed on the back.

Value of the \$10 note is about \$400 today, depending on its condition.

Those of a higher denomination bring a progressively larger amount, one that rises almost astronomically. The reason is that the more money the original owner had tied up in one of these notes, the more certain he was to cash it in on the day the interest became payable.

A man might easily forget a \$10 note, but to forget one for \$1000 would be virtually unthinkable.

HAMMERLESS ANTIQUE RIFLE PRODUCED IN 1840'S

The rifle looked like an antique, which it was, but being hammerless, it clearly incorporated one of the more modern improvements.

It was one of the revolving cylinder type that quickly evolved from development of the revolver popularized by Colonel Samuel Colt.

The weapon was a .35 calibre, eight-shooter with a 33-inch barrel engraved for half its length with a tapering design of arabesques. Stamped in the metal was the legend "Patent Arms Mfg. Co., Paterson, N. J."

The fluted cylinder was engraved between the flutes with tiny centaurs, a motif that is found on several of the early Colt weapons. As a rule, however, the figures are considerably larger and are often accompanied by others of a different nature. In view of the size, plus the unusual engraving on the barrel, it seemed likely that weapon was a custom job.

Further support for that opinion lay in its calibre size. While revolving cylinder carbines and rifles were produced in a variety of calibres, ranging into the low 70s, a .34 calibre seems to have been one of the most popular. Since this was a .35, it had probably been ordered by some perfectionist of the more finicky type that is fairly common among rifle enthusiasts.

As to the age of the rifle, it was probably made in 1840 and certainly not later than early 1842, since that was the year the firm ceased production soon after its failure in 1841.

Because of the engraving and condition, the heavy piece — nearly 13 pounds in weight — had brought a price of \$800. Without the engraving and in poor condition, it would still have brought half that amount in all probability.

(Released by McClure Newspaper Syndicate)

280,000 Vets to Get Claims Reviewed by VA

More than 280,000 veterans whose claims for compensation or pension had previously been denied by the Veterans Administration will now have their claims reviewed. S. T. Branck, contact representative, VA Domiciliary, Camp White, said today.

These veterans are those whose claims were disallowed by VA after World War II and prior to 1955 for the reason that their claimed disabilities were not shown at the time of their last examination.

Branck said VA for the past several years has been conducting a review for errors in compensation and pension claims allowed after World War II, and veteran organizations had requested a similar review of disallowed cases.

Consequently, a pilot study was ordered in March, 1958, to determine whether a broadened review of disallowed claims was in order. The pilot study was carried on in seven regional offices in widely separated sections of the nation.

An overwhelming majority of the cases reviewed showed that correct adjudicative procedures had been made, yet there was sufficient evidence to warrant an overall review of these cases as a matter of equity and complete fairness to the veterans involved, Branck said.

By far the largest source of the comparatively few errors discovered was the category "disability not shown at time of last examination." A full review is being ordered of the more than 280,000 disallowed claims in this category.

Projecting the findings of the pilot study to the disallowed claims involved, in a broadened review indicates as many as 2,000 veteran-claimants might be found eligible for monetary awards.

The new review, Branck said, will soon be underway in several VA regional offices on a "time available" basis, and will be extended to all 67 regional offices as soon as the current workload permits.

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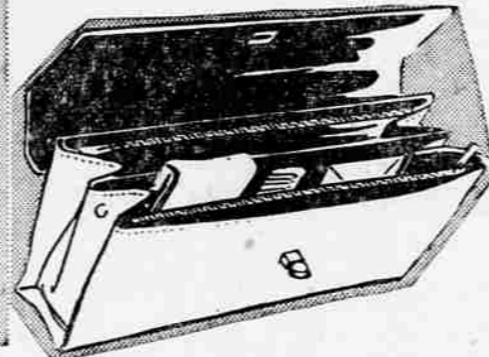
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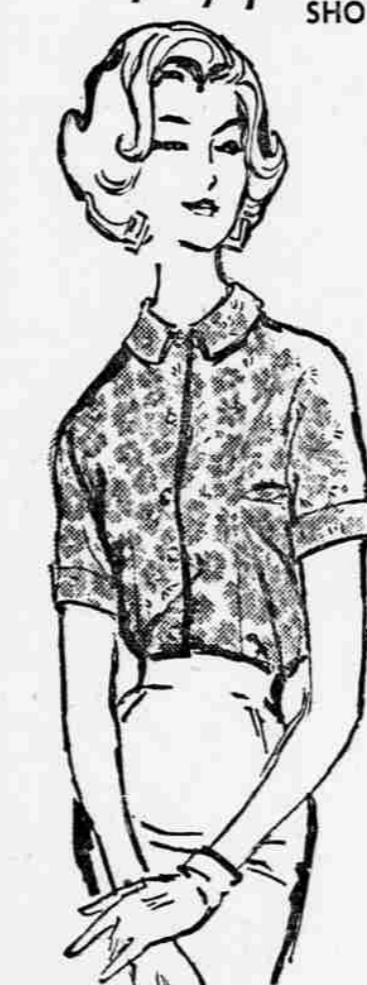
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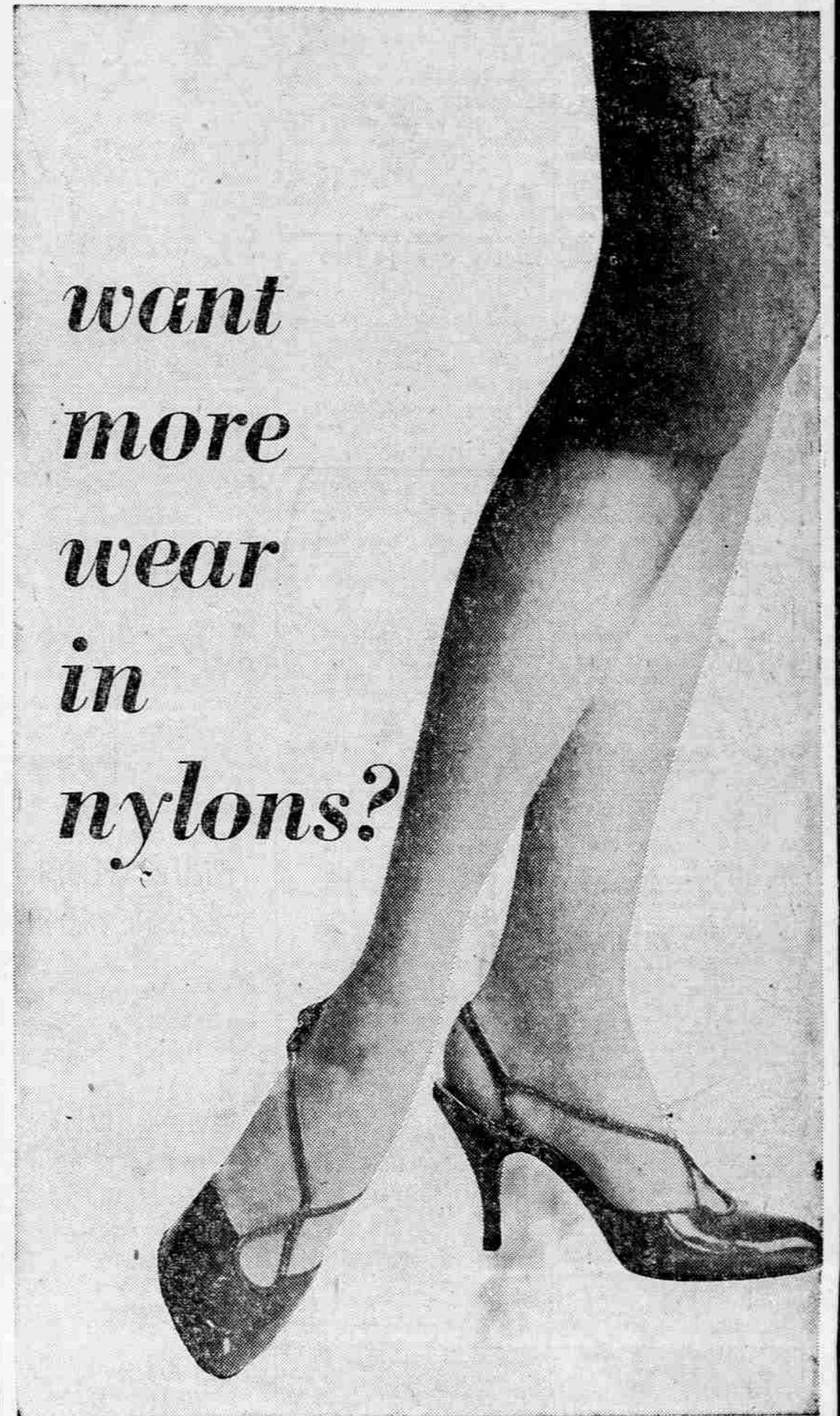
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