

Another Angle On Rearing Twenties

My children find it difficult to believe that, although I grew up during the 1920's, I never met Al Capone, danced the Charleston, played the ukulele or rode in a Stutz Bearcat.

Because of television, the children feel they know all about that roaring decade. But the 20's they know and the 20's I remember seem to be two entirely different eras.

Elliot Ness never came roaring down Main Street in Orwell, Ohio. In pursuit of gangsters in a Chalmers Six. If he had, I would have hopped on my bicycle and hurried to see the battle, you can be sure. But the only gunplay I remember was at the Opera House—later renamed the "Carm" when the proprietor bought a new electric sign and preferred to pay for three letters rather than ten.

Hoot Gibson and I used to meet there every Saturday night. Well, did a lot of shooting, looming large on the screen while the piano player thundered her way across the keyboard, but he shot quietly, for the talkies had not yet arrived.

Al Capone never showed up in Orwell, either. I suppose there were those in the neighborhood who danced the Charleston, but I never did. I didn't speak to girls then and they didn't speak to me, and it would have been difficult to find a partner. As for the Bearcats, I don't think there was a Stutz in town. There were plenty of Model T's, though, which had a lot more personality, especially on a cold morning.

Can recall quite plainly when Clara Bow had "it," although it was never quite what "it" was, and when "sex" you was considered the ultimate in sophisticated repartee. I can remember Calvin Coolidge, rumble seats, Harold Lloyd, and the noise a pair of corduroy knickers made when you walked along. But those aren't the things the children want me to tell them about.

I knew who Capone and Legs Diamond were, all right. But they weren't the celebrities of our lives that Hoot Gibson, Chalmers and Uncle Billy Smith were. Uncle Billy had been a drummer boy in the Civil War. Every town in the ex-drummer boy then, grown gray and given to telling eye-witness tales of battles he never came near. I had the impression then that the Civil War consisted solely of an army of drummer boys, marching in a rhythmic, unbroken line that stretched from Washington to Richmond.

As I understood the situation, Grant had more and better drummer boys, which was the reason Lee finally gave up. If I had grown up in Georgia, I suppose, Lee would have had the edge in drummer boys. But that wasn't the way Uncle Billy described it.

My children aren't impressed by such recollections, of course. They know the 1920's weren't like that. They think the reason my reminiscences are so dull is that I'm hiding something.

"You mean you never saw a gangster or a Prohibition agent, Dad?"

Well, there was the time my Boy Scout troop was encamped along Lake Erie and a boat loomed offshore in the darkness and began firing a light. We signaled back with our flashlight, sure we were about to capture some rum runners from Canada. But the boat pulled away and we never found out who was aboard.

It was true, too, that I was a member of a gang then. Our headquarters were in a cabin we had constructed in Dixon's Woods and we were a tough looking crew, sitting around our camp fire, armed to the teeth with BB guns. If any Indians had shown up we would have given a good account of ourselves, you can be sure. But none ever did.

"Well, then, what did you do, Dad?" the children demand. "Sit around and listen to Russ Columbo records?"

But I have to disappoint even that modest expectation. We didn't listen to records much. It was partly that it was too much trouble to keep winding the phonograph. But it was mostly that the songs in those vanished days

were not designed for children, the way the songs are now.

Oh, I'll admit if you listen to the songs Columbus and Rudy Vallee used to sing, it sounds as though they were written for children, and fairly backward ones, at that. But they weren't.

Not that we didn't do our best to waste our inheritance of hours. We sat through scores of the worst movies ever made, and a few of the best. We swayed in places I wouldn't allow my children to go near. We argued interminably over whether someone had tagged third base in what would now be called a softball game, but was then called "indoor," perhaps because it was always played outside.

The third base in question would never have passed muster in a Little League game. It was a rock and our stadium was a vacant lot. The world had not yet learned that children require a \$100,000 playground in order to get exercise, writes Robert W. Wells in the Christian Science Monitor.

There were no adults to supervise, the way there'd be now. The only times adults appeared was when someone hit a long fly ball toward right field. A long fly ball in that direction usually meant trouble. On such occasions we left before the adult advisers arrived, unless they were unusually tall runners.

I don't try to tell my children this, but we had little contact with the adult world then, except at mealtimes. This suited us and it seemed to suit the adults. Still, I think there was more real tolerance between the generations then.

When the ball went through the window no one called the town constable the way they would now. And if they'd called him, he wouldn't have come. It would have been beneath his dignity, especially as he'd played ball on the same vacant lot himself once and hit his share of flies to far right field.

Perhaps, looking back at it, the constable was the man responsible for keeping the 20's from roaring very loudly in Orwell and thus, indirectly, to blame for my inability to live up to the children's expectations.

If a Marmion full of gangsters had come careening through town, with Ness and his boys in hot pursuit, the constable would have taken stern action. He would have hopped into his Model T and gone larry-hopping after them.

And when he caught them, he would have hauled them before the Mayor and given the lot of them fines that would have taught them a good lesson.

He was a tolerant man, the constable was, when it came to boys playing indoor, or the driving habits of local residents. But he would never have stood for Capone running through the red light that marked the intersection of Routes 45 and 322 in the center of the village.

Capone was from out of town. And that would have been reason enough to teach him a little respect for law and order.

Modern Etiquette

By Anne Ashley

Q. When an invitation has been received written on an informal card, and a reply is requested, is it proper to make this reply over the telephone?

A. It is quite all right to acknowledge an informal invitation of this kind on the telephone.

Q. Just what is considered the proper length of time between the announcement of an engagement and the wedding itself?

A. There is no "proper" length of time. Usually, however, the maximum is about six months, and if a couple anticipates a greater length of time, the announcement should be postponed or, if it is in the newspaper, it can be ended with the statement, "No date has as yet been set for the wedding."

Q. If a girl is to be married in church wearing an afternoon dress and having only one maid-of-honor, is she supposed to invite only a few very friends and relatives to a wedding of this type?

A. There is no limit to the number of guests she may invite, provided, of course, there is ample room for everyone.

Q. When seated at the bar in a cocktail lounge, are you supposed to tip the barman?

A. While not exactly necessary, it still seems to be expected in some places—and especially when one's change is returned in a small tray.

Q. When mailing birthday-greeting cards to my women friends, whom my husband knows only slightly, am I supposed to sign both our names, or just mine alone?

A. Since these are your own personal friends, you need not include your husband's name.



INTRODUCES DAUGHTER—President Sukarno, right, introduces his young daughter to visiting U.S. Attorney General and Mrs. Robert Kennedy during dinner in Jakarta, Indonesia.



CHRONICLES OF GINGER FARM by Gwendoline P. Clarke

The weather around here still leaves much to be desired but I suppose we can think ourselves lucky we are not in Europe or Los Angeles. Of course most people carry on regardless of the weather. But not I—I postpone going out until the going is good. Sometimes that leads to inconvenience. Last Friday we were down to a few dollars in the house, no meat and minus quite a few groceries. So before I was even out of bed I was writing out a shopping list. Then Partner came along, told me I had better forget about shopping, it was half-freezing rain and as slippery as could be underfoot. That was enough to make me revise all my plans; look through my supply shelves once again and figure out make-shift menus for the weekend. And then late in the afternoon it turned soft so away we

went after all. The bank was open so we got our business done there; bought our meat and groceries and on the way home got a "Take-home" order of fish and chips for supper. Partner came with me—and that was one for the record because he hates shopping! However, I suppose he was just being helpful, leaving his car with me—and that was one for the record because he hates shopping! However, I suppose he was just being helpful, leaving his car with me—and that was one for the record because he hates shopping!

Now I am wondering how much I'll get done this week. I have several full days planned ahead, including a "hair-do", a visit to an oculist and to go with the Girl Guide Festival at the C.N.R. grounds. Again everything depends on the weather. Last week before this column was in the mail Russ was here

with his Dad—just for about fifteen minutes. He had just been released from the hospital and was on his way home. Thursday Ross and Cedric spent the day here while their mother was at the dentist. Poor little Ross, he looked as if he had been dragged through the proverbial knothole. One of our little neighbours had also been having a rough time since having her tonsils out. Perhaps there isn't too much to worry about as one doctor said it is really about six months before a child shows any definite improvement after a tonsillectomy.

What do you think of these incidents? Each one is an eye-witness account of two curious accidents that were told to me last week, neither of which need have happened. A neighbour was sitting in a parked car at a shopping centre waiting for his friend to finish shopping. Suddenly he noticed a car with only a little boy in it start to move. It took a zig-zag course, side-swiping no less than four cars on its way, stopping just before it reached neighbour T's car. By this time T was out of the car. He got to the runaway car just as it was a passenger was a two-door car and an elderly gentleman occupied the front passenger seat. He got to the runaway car just as it was a passenger was a two-door car and an elderly gentleman occupied the front passenger seat.

On several visits I have found friendly sheep in the churchyard; coming close up to me they allowed much rubbing of noses and stroking of their thick wool. Again I realized how easy, how pitifully easy, it is to make friends with animals and gain their trust. . . .

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Young Pigs Visit A Church Service

I found personality yet again in some of the creatures who surprisingly visit the little church so uniquely situated within the wood itself. I well remember the delight and surprise I experienced the first time I entered the door to find that a robin had nested in the lecture. I have known swallows build in one or two church beams, and swallows in the beams of East Bergholt church in Suffolk, but I have never myself seen a bird build so low down in a church, or in such close proximity to visitors who pass in and out. I was told the robin even continued to brood undisturbed by the forthrightly services held here. The porch door is kept open during the spring and summer, and the bird actually flew in and out, returning to feed her young as the service was in progress, and successfully rearing her family. . . .

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Young Pigs Visit A Church Service

I found personality yet again in some of the creatures who surprisingly visit the little church so uniquely situated within the wood itself. I well remember the delight and surprise I experienced the first time I entered the door to find that a robin had nested in the lecture. I have known swallows build in one or two church beams, and swallows in the beams of East Bergholt church in Suffolk, but I have never myself seen a bird build so low down in a church, or in such close proximity to visitors who pass in and out. I was told the robin even continued to brood undisturbed by the forthrightly services held here. The porch door is kept open during the spring and summer, and the bird actually flew in and out, returning to feed her young as the service was in progress, and successfully rearing her family. . . .

On one occasion when I attended a service here, four baby pigs with obvious personality walked through the open door and up the aisle, voicing as young pigs will, and certainly giving an unusual variety to the service. There can be little doubt that personality in pigs, even as in humans, sometimes makes them difficult, and much tact and patience was necessary before these scaly quadrupeds, not being welcomed as members of the congregation, were induced to turn back down the aisle and through the porch to a more suitable environment. So ended an unusual, by long and intriguing morning service.

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Whenever I come to this church in the wood, I am always conscious of its personality. It imparts an atmosphere of serenity which may be due to a certain extent to its remarkable situation; it is so comfortably set, as it were, in a nest of trees. In the spring a nightingale is singing from the nearby bush, a turtle dove uttering its soothing notes, the blackbirds piping and the robins hopping up and down in and out of the ever open door, and I am for the moment content. From "Each in His Own Way." By Nancy Price.

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