

# Chapter 9

## Other Things To Say

Circumstances on occasion creates a mood for self expression on some particular subject that does not apply to any particular area or person.

There may also be stories concerning events, or people, that fit in more than one place.

I have simply grouped these into a chapter of their own. They are :

- 9.1 Friends and Acquaintances
- 9.2 Say It Simple.
- 9.3 Do You Listen.
- 9.4 Procrastination.
- 9.5 Old Bibles.
- 9.6 Old Ledgers
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- 9.10 Wood Stoves
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- 9.15 Corn and Cornbread
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- 9.17 A Diary
- 9.18 Muddy Roads
- 9.19 Share The Fun
- 9.20 Oral History And Folklore



9.1

### FRIENDS & ACQUAINTANCES

Those of us who have moved around in our lifetime from rural to city, to urban, and back to rural life, can appreciate the differences encountered in acquiring friends and acquaintances.

We can all look back with a great deal of happiness on the list of very special people stored away in our memory cells, and there are many others we may have forgotten, but our past experiences with them have helped to mold us into what we are today.

It would appear that the big cities, the big companies, the big churches and schools, etc., are the places where the action is, where the fun is, and where friends are limitless.

It is true that big business, and big cities have the means for developing a way of life for different from that experienced in the rural areas. Young people especially, are lured away from their rural, friendly, and understanding neighborhoods, only to find it hard to cope with the cold indifference of the "city or urban world."

To acquire a circle of friends in the populated areas one must get involved in the church and organizational activities, where a closeness can develop within smaller groups of people with a common interest. However, unless these activities are continually nurtured, everyone soon gets lost in the crowd.

In the small town, friendships are developed perhaps a bit slower than in the city but they run deep, and last a lifetime. As time passes they spread out into the outlying farms, and into the neighboring towns within a radius of several miles. Each person becomes an individual, rather than a number, and each person is known for what he is, for what he stands for, and for what talents or habits, or beliefs, he or she may have.

Whether we like it or not, country folk live in glass houses, and our way of life spreads fast. But folks want to know about other folks because of their genuine interest in each other's welfare. Rural folks were not

nosey when they listened in on someone else's telephone conversations years ago. Often they would "break in" to offer help. My father could never change his ways on visits to the city. Many times he embarrassed his dear wife with his continuous greeting of everyone he met on the street, even on Seventh and Locust. When ignored he was hurt.

A typical example of rural vs. urban life is as follows: Johnny boards a heavily loaded Hazelwood School bus, and knows only three or four kids. In his school he "fights" his way through the jammed, block long, corridors to get to his next classroom, and has only a handful of friends among the thousands. Another Johnny boards a crowded Daniel Bone School bus outside of New Melle and knows everyone in it and in his school. The same situation exists when comparing big city churches or corporations.

It can be stated as true that your list of friends and acquaintances will tend to decrease as the population of your area increases.

This finally leads me to those wonderful small town "family style dinners." May they never cease. Each church denomination in each town had their special dinner this year, and we made most of them, and each time we visited with many friends we had not seen for a while. Everyone of course, enjoys a delicious Sunday dinner, but the fellowship that is very much a part of these dinners is an extra bonus.

It is hard work to prepare for the guests, and the burden seems to fall too often on the same faithful few. They should be commended for their efforts. Clyde Koelling and his wife in Defiance Sunday were not complaining when they told us they had worked four straight days on the dinner at St. Pauls. They really enjoyed the fellowship with their friends.

Also Charles Picraux was thoroughly enjoying himself pouring coffee. Candidate, lawyer and historian Kreite Stumberg and his family sat at our table, and behind us was a group of former

storekeepers. They were the Kesslers who had a store in Defiance, the Welges and Bruns from New Melle, and the Gus Ostmans from St. Charles.

9.2

### SAY IT SIMPLE

We live today in a highly complex world. So complex, in fact, that specialists dominate in every field. An industrious man who is both clever, and possessed of plain good horse sense just doesn't seem to have a chance any more. The world has advanced so rapidly since the end of World War II in technology, medicine, economics, law, government, sociology, agriculture, and even in religious concepts, that human reasoning is almost taxed beyond the power to reason.

Consequently, we as individuals, tend to accept without questioning the problems, schemes, and solutions laid before us. Every answer is dependent on many factors. The world no longer lives by such simple rules as good or evil, true or false, white or black, etc. Rather, it's the gray matter in between that mankind wrestles with. It's what man can get by with that seems to count. Thus, we become apathetic. Or simply, we become soft and subject ourselves to the whims of those who would misguide us.

We would all do ourselves a good turn if we would always seek the aid of only those experts or professionals who speak to us in a plain, straightforward manner. A true professional need not baffle us with his superior knowledge, or submit a complex agreement, or write a paragraph that requires a dictionary repeatedly.

A Safeco Insurance pamphlet has this to say about simplicity, quote — "Talk plainly, briefly, naturally, sensibly, truthfully, purely. Keep from slang, don't put on airs; say what you mean, mean what you say. And above all — DON'T USE BIG WORDS." end quote.

No. 104 OCT. 6, 1975

9.1 & 9.2



## 9.3

### DO YOU LISTEN

Listening intently to what one has to say, and grasping the real meaning of a message, and then repeating it correctly, is most important to our everyday relationship with our friends and business associates. Do you really listen? Or do your in-attentive ears deceive you as they did for the three hard of hearing Englishmen who were on their way to Wimberley. One said "Is this Wimberley?" "No," said another, "this is Thursday." The third replied, "I am too, let's stop and have a drink."

No. 55 OCT. 30, 1974

## 9.4

### PROCRASTINATION

The word "procrastination" appears to be such a big word, but we all know that it simply means to postpone, to delay, to put off or to stave off, to table, to pigeonhole, to put on ice or on the shelf, or to sleep on. Regardless of the expression one may choose to use, it is a weakness the majority of us suffer from all too frequently.

Why do we procrastinate? Why can't we discipline ourselves to follow Ben Franklin's axiom, "Don't put off until tomorrow what can be done today"? Perhaps we are sometimes too lazy to do what we ought, or the really necessary task is not as appealing as other tasks not quite so necessary. The right time to start that project, make that investment, write that letter, or invite those dear friends, never seems to arrive. Maybe in our desire to do so many things, or in our inability to say "No" once in a while, we spread ourselves too thin. Could it be too that we enjoy punishing ourselves by waiting until the last minute because we seem to work better under pressure. Whatever the cause may be the practice leads only to frustration. Waiting until Sunday evening to write this column is one of my procrasti-

nating exercises, and thanks to those newspaper deadlines, the pressure is there, and the job somehow always manages to get done. When it is done however, a lingering thought always persists — "Will readers accept and enjoy the column half as much as I enjoy writing it?"

No. 106 OCT. 20, 1975

## 9.5

### OLD BIBLES

Most of our area's Bibles that are old enough to be classified as antique copies are printed in German, and only a few bear a publishing date earlier than 1850. This is due to the heavy influx of German immigrants settling here around the middle of the 19th century.

Recently, however, a young lady brought an English Bible into the store that was published in 1814 by Eastburn, Kirk & Co. in New York. The authorized version was prepared by Adam Clarke, LL.D.F.S.A. This 161-year old manuscript would certainly be a treasure in anyone's library of old books. It brings to mind a few interesting comments concerning our very early Holy Bibles.

Many people may not realize that mankind no longer has access to the infallible originals of either the Old or New Testaments. In fact, the earliest copies preserved are no closer than 1000 years to the time of original composition.

The Hebrew manuscripts take top priority as God's revelation came first to Israel in the Hebrew tongue, and because this was first given to the Hebrews, we are today most fortunate. History records that Jewish scholars, from the original text on down, were entrusted with preserving the text carefully. These were known as "scribes" and they viewed their responsibility with reverence, regarding it as a sacred duty. In order to insure textural purity, various devices of counting were used to cross-check the accuracy of each newly written manuscript. Careful records were kept of the number of words and

even the letters. Note what it says in Matthew 5:18 about this: "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law."

As manuscripts became old and worn they were culled from the library. Scrolls deteriorated quite rapidly through use and had to be replaced often, much like we do with old worn out things today, and although nothing remains of these originals we have every reason to believe that the copies today are authentic. The very earliest versions in part are, of course, the Dead Sea Scrolls written between 150 and 100 BC. They were found in 1947 by a Bedouin youth near Qumran along the Dead Sea when he accidentally threw a stone into a cave and heard the tinkle of a breaking pot. They have helped to substantiate in every way our present copy. There is in existence a Greek version known as the Septuagint, translated in Alexandria between 250 and 150 BC, and later Greek versions from 130 to 190 A.D., some Aramaic versions as early as 300 A.D., a 200 A.D. Latin version, Jerome's Vulgate dated 390 A.D., some 300 A.D. Syriac versions. The British Museum has a copy of the Pentateuch dated 850 A.D. and the Leningrad museum has portions of Old Testament versions dated 916 A.D. and 1010 A.D. It may be comforting too, to know that excavations in the Bible lands, that have developed almost to an exact science in recent years, have revealed ancient libraries on clay tablets which have in turn backed up many Biblical happenings.

No. 106 OCT. 22, 1975

## 9.6

### OLD LEDGERS

Old store ledgers, or Day Books from 19th Century General Stores, are becoming a rarity. This is unfortunate because they tell us so much of the history of a community. The merchants would carefully record the customer's name, date of purchase, items purchased, and cost each time he came into the store. If a page was set aside for each

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customer an index was provided. Consequently, when these two inch thick, leather bound ledgers are examined it is possible to list quite accurately most of the men who were living in the community at the time, the goods that were offered for sale, and the prices. The word "men" was used purposely above, instead of "men and women," as it is rare when a woman's name is found in these ledgers. It was long before women's lib.

It has been my good fortune to retrieve a number of my father's General Store Ledgers dated from 1878 to 1922, from his first store in Foristell where he was in partnership with Mr. Schatz when he was only 18 years old. Others are from his store in Matson, Mo., and from his third and last store in Defiance. Three of the books are on display in the Cracker Barrel now and many customers have enjoyed coming in to compare the prices of old with those of today. Others enjoy finding some exact date when their ancestors came in to make a purchase.

No. 26 APR. 17, 1974

9.7

#### WOODEN BOXES

Many people who come into the Cracker Barrel for the first time are intrigued by the number of old 19th century wooden boxes on display. Decades ago when lumber was cheap, and wages were low, all general store items were shipped in by riverboat or train. Usually they were made from cottonwood or soft yellow pine. Some were nailed together. Others were mortised and tenoned like the Arm & Hammer, the Winchester, and the Remington Arms boxes. Stenciling, embossed painted lettering, and glued on labels were often elaborate, with the produce and company thoroughly identified. All have become collectors items to a degree, and the mortised and tenoned boxes are the most cherished.

I can remember as a boy prying the lids off the boxes in my father's store when a shipment arrived from St. Louis via the

Katy. When they were empty we would split them up for kindling, or just pitch them onto a bonfire. As kids we would occasionally seek out the strongest boxes, turn them over and nail on an axle in the middle, and a stick of some sort on the front for a handle, slip on a couple of old tricycle wheels, and we would have a brand new cart. Fine bird houses could also be made from the half inch thick ends.

So, for years we have been collecting wooden boxes that had somehow been saved from destruction. Fortunately there were a few remaining in the store from John Kessler and Merc. Co. days, and the store is the best place to display them for all to benefit.

There is a Church & Co. box with the familiar Arm & Hammer Trade Mark. It held 80 lbs of baking soda at 10 cents/lb. Price is now 52 cents. Another stenciling reads "Same Price Today as Forty Years Ago — KC Baking Powder — 25 ozs for 25 cents." Price is now 7 ozs for 47 cents. There is a Jello box with red letters, and Yeast Foam, Carter's Mucilage — Great Stickist, Rising Sun Stove Polish, Cream of Wheat, Carter's Writing Fluid, Mayrose Cheese, Union Biscuit Company, Winchester Ammunition, Remington Arms, and several cigar boxes, and last week my cousin Josie brought in an old Capewell Horse Nail Co. box that held 25 lbs of No. 7, the "Best Driving Nail" made in Hartford, Conn. Stamped on the side was J. H. Borgelt, Foristell, Mo. She had found it in the barn and it came from the Borgelt Blacksmith Shop in Cappeln.

No. 162 FEB. 14, 1977

9.8

#### Paper Bags

Much is said these days about the shortage of paper bags and paper bags, of course, have become almost a necessity in the store business.

In the early days, say around 1845, purchases were wrapped in "pokes" or "paper." A capable clerk would form a cornucopia shaped cone, fold the bottom

point, pour rolled oats, beans, sugar etc. into the cone, shake it down, fold the top down, and in the twinkling of an eye tie it up with a string hanging from an overhead string holder.

Before the Civil War, cotton bags were used but soon cotton became scarce. In 1852, Francis Walle of Bethlehem, Pa. invented a machine which would cut paper, fold and paste it with a flour paste into a bag. Other inventors followed, but it wasn't until 1870 that paper bags were produced in quantity. Now, just 100 years later, the "endless" supply of paper bags may be going through its full cycle.

No. 11 DEC. 31, 1973

9.9

#### DELTIOLOGIST

Deltiologist. It was a new word in my vocabulary. Yesterday we were invited to the home of Mr. and Mrs. Walter E. Welp to view Mr. Welp's post card collection. I knew that he had a famous collection, but no one can really comprehend the magnificence, or the magnitude of this collection, until it is viewed personally. We first entered the sun room where a number of albums were on display and where the sun lit up the windows of rare Union Station and World's Fair cards.

Next, in the rathskellar, Mr. Welp in gay Bicentennial attire, was waiting in the midst of some 200, 24" by 30" panels of cards dating from the late 1800's through 1915, in complete sets, and encompassing every conceivable subject. The panels lined the walls, and formed a double row down the center. Two large stacks were even on the tables.

When post cards were first designed they served as a greeting to a friend or loved one. They were beautifully embossed or enameled. Some had bits of actual material such as human hair, silk, leather, feathers, etc. added to give reality to the picture. The majority were of German origin. All were here to enjoy. The beautiful rooms on the main floor and the stairways, were also lined with exquisite

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displays. Finally there is the work and storage area where scores of boxes housing 300 cards each are kept. Fireproof cabinets protect the rarest cards. Every file container is carefully marked for instant recall.

Walter Welp has been collecting cards for 35 years. He is an active member in such clubs as the "Windy City Postcard Club," the "American View Card Club," the "Lone Star Card Club," and others. Many awards and news clippings are in his office. One states that he is a "graduate Deltiologist," which is the professional name for a Post Card Collector.

Mr. Welp, who with over 600,000 post cards in his collection, and who is recognized as the No. 2 collector in the United States, and the No. 3 collector in the world, is truly a professional. In conclusion may I quote from a little card in his office — "What Is An Antique? — The perfection of yesterday. The treasure of today. The heritage of tomorrow."

No. 103 OCT. 15, 1975

9.10

#### WOOD STOVES

The energy crisis has again created a big demand for wood burning stoves. Stores have completely sold out, and the winter will probably be over before a new supply comes in.

Customers have been coming into the Cracker Barrel inquiring where one may be available, so if anyone has a stove for sale, check for potential buyers at the store. Fortunately we have succeeded in purchasing a fine old "Warm Morning" wood and coal stove for the Cracker Barrel as a supplementary heater.

Heating with wood, of course, creates a considerable quantity of ashes. The ash boxes must be cleaned out regularly and carefully, and the ashes will probably be thrown out on the nearest trash pile, or some may be scattered on gardens to add potash to the soil.

In early America, however, ashes were valuable because of the great demand for potash.

Potash is the crude potassium carbonate obtained by leaching wood ashes and evaporating the solution to dryness. In ancient times this was performed in iron pots, and thus the name was derived from "pots" and "ashes."

Potash was used in soaps, washing of wollens, and in glass making. Wood ashes were in such demand during Colonial times that settlements now comprising Maine and New Hampshire derived their chief wealth from the fats and wood ashes they exported to England. Country stores would buy up ashes from people in the surrounding neighborhood as late as 1841 for six cents to 12 cents per bushel. Some would be used for barter. For instance, a man could buy one yard of pigtail tobacco for one bushel of ashes.

No. 10 DEC. 26, 1973

9.11

#### DIVERSITY

When the world was young everything was in balance. There was perfect harmony, and although early man did not understand the reason for such improbable creatures as the octopus, the elephant, and the mosquito, their existence was for a purpose. Nearly one million species of insects have been classified, but there are perhaps three million still to be discovered. Human beings, too, were created in many different colors, and they speak 2800 different languages. Our Creator designed this diversification so that all living plants and creatures could cope with changing conditions. Man in his ignorance, however, reasoned differently. He chose to standardize, to specialize, and to exploit. Mass production, and advances in transportation and communication have spread modern man's way of life rapidly throughout the world. Thus, today we find how hard it is for so much that is living to cope with changing conditions.

Today rough fish only survive in one time beautiful rivers and streams, sparrows and starlings have driven the song birds from towns and farms to a few

Today country folks talk and dress like city folks, and city folks talk and dress like country folks. Chain restaurants, and their menus, are in every state;

airports all look alike; bikinis are as common in conservative mid-west as they are in far off Acapulco, and one might even find a GE air conditioning unit in a south seas thatched hut.

One must travel to remote places to be intrigued with an entirely different way of life.

There are signs though that diversification is being looked upon as essential to our survival and well being. There is now a strong effort to preserve diversity in plants and wildlife because we need their varied gene pools to survive unforeseen contingencies. Government headquarters and major institutions are being located away from their traditional central areas, businesses are finding it to be more profitable and safer to diversify, and tourist areas are encouraging a return to native dress and customs.

No. 220 MAY 8, 1978

9.12

#### BASEBALL/SOFTBALL

The regular baseball season has ended and the Cardinals came within an eyelash of capturing another pennant. Nevertheless, they gave the local fans many thrills throughout the closing weeks.

The slow pitch softball season has also come to a close for the New Melle team and neighboring opponents. It was concluded last week with a Memorial Tournament in honor of former teammates Jimmy Schuster and Lavon Schmidt. Sixteen teams participated under the lights, and throughout the daylight hours, until the full schedule of games was completed.

Games were played at the Community Club park before large, enthusiastic crowds who paid a modest admittance fee, and patronized the refreshment stand.

Profits will go back into ball field improvements, and a plaque in memory of Jimmy and Lavon will be on display in the Com-

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munity Club Hall at all times.

Tournament winners were: Wentzville, first place; Don's Barber Shop of O'Fallon, second; Kolb Excavating of Harvester, third; and the Crossroads, fourth. Other teams came from Hermann, Troy, Wright City, and four from O'Fallon. Bill Almeling and Bob Smart are the managers of our New Melle team.

In recent years softball has replaced hardball in many communities. The writer is not sure why. Possibly because games are generally played at night, and since this is the case the smaller diamond and outfield does not require the extensive lighting as in hardball. Then too, in hardball an adequate pitching staff must be developed to make the game both competitive and interesting. This is not so necessary in softball. Regardless, though of the reason, many towns that would not think of sponsoring anything but standard baseball, now play only softball.

Some readers will recall the "Bush Leagues" of the past, and many big leaguers came up out of these Bush Leagues. A search through the family scrapbook revealed the following news clipping that may be of interest as familiar names are recognized, quote; "Hamburg had a fine team in 1909. The Hamburg Blues, with Arlie Schiermeier, pitcher, and Grover Hoffman, catcher, were hard to beat. Hy Mades, business man of Hamburg, was Manager of the Blues. Those who proudly wore the blue and white uniform were; Elton Pitman, RF, McGowen, LF, Ed Rhodes, 2B, Les Stewart and Arlie Schiermeier, P. Grover Hoffman, C. Austin Stewart, CF, Frank A. Beyl, SS, T. Y. Yahn, 1B, Hy Schneider, 3B, and Hy Mades, Manager. Arlie Schiermeier was, in his day, as good as any of them, and a foxy pitcher all the time. He had curves and speed and knew how to use them. Frank Beyl nearly made the big leagues. Clyde Seib, pitcher, and Hog Boehmer, catcher, were also outstanding Hamburg players. Hamburg was a team with plenty of speed." End quote.

No. 52 Oct. 9, 1974

9.13

### PARADES

A German archaeologist, Robert Koldewey, once discovered three great works in the ruins of fabulous Babylon, in the ancient land of Mesopotamia, the cradle of civilization. These three great works of early man were the debris of the hanging gardens of Babylon; the remains of what is considered to be the Tower of Babel (a ziggurat reaching 288 feet into the sky); and the great procession street leading from the Tower to the gate of Ishtar.

Nebuchadnezzar had the street built during the 43 years of his reign. He died in 562 B.C. The street was 73 feet wide and lined by protective walls 22 feet high. It was beautifully decorated with all sorts of carvings and inscriptions. Truly it was a fitting thoroughfare "for the procession (or parading) of the great Lord Maduck."

There is evidence in many other ways, but not so elaborate as the above, that parades were staged as early as 3200 B.C., before the invention of writing. The earliest written reference to anything like a parade was found in Egypt. It goes back to 2500 B.C. when King Semvosret III had these words inscribed "I celebrated the procession of the God Upwawet."

Aristotle once wrote that "Imitation is natural to man from childhood, and it is natural for all to delight in works of imitation." A parade then has been a natural way for man to fulfill his desire to imitate. The famous parades in ancient Greece and Rome, the early pre-Lenten Festivities in Central Europe, and the colorful parades in Asia, are well known spectacles. Parades of all descriptions for centuries have been universal throughout the world. Then as now, they had all the essentials: music, marchers, floats and animals.

Webster defines a parade as "Any march or procession; a movement of any body marshaled in something like a military order." That can mean anything from a few youngsters hauling a string of wagons around the block, to the Tournament of Roses

in Pasadena on News Year's Day.

Parades in America have certainly had early beginnings, and they were often inspired by great leaders. An example is taken from a letter John Adams wrote to his wife on July 3, 1776; quote, — "The second day of July, 1776, will be the most memorable epoch in the history of America. I am apt to believe that it will be established by succeeding generations as the day of deliverance, by solemn acts of devotion to God Almighty. It ought to be solemnized with pomp and parade, with shows, games, sports, guns, bells, bonfires and illuminations from one end of this continent to the other, from this time forward forevermore." end quote.

Many readers too may recall the historical account of Kingshighway in St. Louis, which was laid out specifically for a parade in anticipation of a visit by the King of France. It was to be the widest, and most beautiful street in the city and lined with trees. Tons and tons of earth were even brought in to raise it above the natural level to further glorify the King as he rode in his carriage. The King cancelled his long sea voyage, but nevertheless, it was that gala parade that inspired a city to build, what was at that time, one of the most beautiful thoroughfares in the world.

We now begin the Bicentennial year of the great event John Adams was talking about, and we are also on the eve of New Melle's Annual Festival Day Parade, which has developed into one of the largest and most interesting small town parades. This year the theme "Past and Present Events," provides a wide latitude for creative float designers to imitate what was once real life.

Experience in float design, and in developing special parade interest features, increases with each year's performance, and this year especially when the Bicentennial spirit is affecting everyone, we can expect the best New Melle Parade ever at 3 p.m. on Sunday, July 27.

No. 91 Jul. 7, 1975

9.12 & 9.13



9.14

### THANKSGIVING FEAST

My thoughts are of the early Pilgrims as we approach another Thanksgiving Day. Very few groups of dedicated people had so little to be thankful for as this small band of Puritans who sailed from England and landed at Plymouth Rock 357 years ago, yet we must search far to find a group more thankful for the little they had after their first harvest season in the new world. Read once again a brief account of their persecution, their hardships, and their determination.

When James I became King of England he tried to enforce obedience to one Church on all the people of England. James I, who cared little for the wishes of the people, publicly stated: "I will govern according to the common weal, and not according to the common will."

At this time there was a group of people in England who wished to purify the church of its old customs. They were called Puritans, and they frankly refused to conform to James I wishes. The King responded by stating, "I will make them conform or I will harry them out of the land."

Thus the Puritan "Separatists" left their native land, going first to Holland in 1607, and then in 1617, deciding to found a Puritan state in America. Three years later an advance guard left Delft Haven in the Speedwell, to be joined at Southhampton by friends from London in the Mayflower. About 120 passengers were on board the two ships, with 90 of these on the Mayflower. After a few days at sea the Speedwell was "open and leakie as a sieve." At one place the captain said "ye water came in as at a mole hole."

After a two-week delay the Speedwell and Mayflower put to sea, but when they were some 300 miles from shore on the Atlantic the Speedwell's skipper complained that his ship was "so leakie as he must bear up or sinke at sea, for they could scarce free her with much pumping."

Again they returned to port, where the captains decided to use the Mayflower only. Everyone had planned so long to go to America. Now, however, some had to stay behind, causing much anguish.

Finally, on Sept. 6, 1620, the Mayflower sailed away from Plymouth on Devon with an excessive passenger list of 102. After 66 days in the open sea, often in severe storms, and with sickness and death on board, the heavily laden ship rounded the curved tip of Cape Cod. They had touched the coast, but could not land because of dangerous reefs, a forbidding shore, and a near mutiny among the crew. The Pilgrims were forced to remain on board nearly six more weeks before the Mayflower was "planted" on high ground just behind the now famous Plymouth Rock, on Dec. 20, 1620.

They had planned to land in early fall, but due to the delays winter was now setting in. It was a dreadful time for this inexperienced, under-nourished group of men, women and children to establish a colony in a wilderness inhabited by hostile Indians.

Rough houses of logs were soon built, the spaces between the logs were daubed with mud, and oiled paper was used for glass in the windows. There was little fuel and scant food. Disease also swept through the families, diagnosed as a powerful combination

of scurvy, pneumonia and tuberculosis. More than half of the party had died before spring came, and three had been carried off by the Indians. Death touched every family except two.

Fortunately some Indians were friendly, who taught them many ways to survive in the wilderness. Chief Squanto, in his teachings, even insisted that three dead herring must be placed spoke-wise in each hillock in the cornfield, with their heads toward the center.

The seasons passed. Soon it was time to bring in the crops, but their first harvest was a disappointment. Their 20 acres of corn had done well enough, however

their six acres of English wheat, barley and peas had come to nothing. Nevertheless, the Pilgrims, with their number now reduced from 102 to 50 considered themselves a thankful lot. They had made peace with the Indians. There had been no sickness throughout the summer and fall months. Eleven houses now lined the street, and there had been no recurrence of dis-sension. So, in October Gov. Bradford decreed a holiday so that all might "after a special manner rejoice together."

As the day of the harvest festival approached, four men were sent out to shoot waterfowl, returning with enough for one week. Chief Massasoit was invited. He came with 90 ravenous braves. Some of these went out and bagged five deer. For three days the Pilgrims, and their guests, gorged themselves on venison, roast duck, roast goose, clams and other shell-fish, succulent eels, white bread, corn bread, leeks and watercress, wild plums, and dried berries for desert — all washed down with wine made of wild grape. There is no mention of them enjoying the "long-legged turkies," whose speed of foot in the woods amazed the Pilgrims. Nor has there ever been any mention of pumpkin pie. Also cranberries were by the bushel in the neighboring bogs but the Pilgrims had not learned how to use them.

The first Thanksgiving Feast was a great success, and the Pilgrims repeated it regularly for generations. In time it became traditional in New England, and eventually it spread throughout the country as a local holiday. In 1863, in the midst of the Civil War, President Lincoln proclaimed the first national Thanksgiving, setting aside the last Thursday in November for the event.

Now as long as any of us can remember, Thanksgiving has been a time for families to come together for a feast, and to give special thanks for the blessings bestowed upon them. Restaurants feature traditional menus of the season, churches conduct special services, and mothers labor long hours preparing their

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favorite dishes for their families.

Cracker Barrel Country, where family gatherings are repeated over and over again, has many wonderful cooks to delight the hungry clans.

For instance, Mrs. August Becker of Cappeln for decades prepared the annual Thanksgiving Dinner of baked chicken with dressing, whole cranberry salad, baked sweet potatoes, homemade canned vegetables, homemade bread, pumpkin pie with real whipped cream, and other things they always had on the farm. When her children and grandchildren came they pulled the table out as far as it would go.

I also talked to Mrs. Meta Paul of New Melle. She too cooked her share of Thanksgiving dinners for her large family. Now they all go to a different home in the family and everyone brings something. Have a happy and thankful Thanksgiving.

No. 148 Nov. 21, 1977

9.15

#### CORN AND CORNBREAD

The story of corn is a fascinating story, not only because it is our nation's leading crop, but also because of its early beginnings.

Most plants, even after they have been highly developed by man, continue to propagate in much the same way as they did in the original wild state. This is not true with corn, as cultivated corn cannot propagate itself due to the tight husk not permitting the kernels to spread.

Corn (or maize as the Indians called it) is native only to Mexico. Years ago in the deep, dry caves near the Gulf of Mexico a tiny primitive variety of cultivated corn made its first appearance, dating back to 2500 B.C. Ears were only two inches long. The mystery of natural propagation, however, remained until later years when tiny cobs, less than one inch long, and with individual kernels smaller than peas, were found in layers of debris in dry caves east of Mexico City. This must have been the original wild corn that was possibly surrounded by a thin husk, allowing the

kernels to sprout as cobs dropped to the ground. This "find" has been dated about 4000 B.C.

Slowly throughout South and Central America corn became a staple crop. Natives learned to improve its quality and yield by cultivation and careful selection of kernels for planting. Corn became highly important and a sacred plant to the South American Indians, such as the Aztecs of Mexico and the Incas of Peru. Idols of gold depicting the "maize god," with ears of corn around her neck, have been found. Even today some Mexican Indians continue the age-old custom of addressing it reverently as "Your Lordship."

Long before the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock corn had found its way into North America. Its development changed rapidly as it moved from tribe to tribe. Through it the Indians found farming more dependable than hunting. Much can be learned about the early cultivation and use of corn from archeological studies of the Indians who lived at Mesa Verda, Colo., 1500 years ago. Here it was learned that the Indian farmer at sunrise in the spring gathered up his pouch of seed corn, plumed prayer stick, and a small bag of cornmeal. As he left his house for the cornfield the women of the household poured bowls of water over him, symbolic of rain, causing summer rains to fall on his crops. He proceeded to a well known central spot and dug six holes one foot deep. Each had a special meaning. He knelt in the center facing east, painted a cross on the ground with cornmeal, murmured a prayer, planted the prayer stick in the center of the cross, and sprinkled it with cornmeal. He then carefully selected four grains of each color, yellow, blue, red, white, speckled, and black, dropped them in the holes, filled the holes with soil, and continued to chant prayers. He then started at the center and planted four long rows of corn, extending north, south, east and west. If the germ gods were pleased with his performance the seeds would sprout and grow.

If summer rains were kind the harvest festival was the happiest time of the year. Corn was every-

where. It was piled high on the roof tops, spread out in every court, some shelled and stored in baskets, but most was stored on the cob in cave storage rooms that had been chinked carefully against rats and mice, and lined with dry corn leaves to protect from dampness. Each storage crevice was then sealed. By carefully conserving supplies their people could survive two to three years' seasons of drouth.

Corn was the backbone of every meal. It was placed on large flat stones or metates. Women would then grind it into cornmeal by hand, using a smaller stone called a mano. A variety of simple cornbreads were made, however a real delicacy developed when cornbread was sweetened with saliva. The women would first chew the cornmeal, and bake it in corn husks. Usually this was only served to honored guests.

In the spring of 1621 peaceful Indians acquainted the Pilgrims with the wonderful grain and taught them how to plant it for a bumper crop. They insisted that three dead herring must be laid spokewise in each hillock with the heads facing the center toward the seeds. In the fall of 1621 their harvest of corn was good, and cornbread was plentiful at their first Thanksgiving feast.

Since those early days corn has reached an amazing state of development with widely differing characteristics. Some varieties mature in two months, others in 11 months. Foliage may be green, brown, red or purple. Ears vary in length from three inches to two feet, and the number of rows on an ear vary from four to 36. Stalks may vary in height from two feet as in the dwarf variety, to 20 feet or more.

There is Dent Corn (our leading commercial type), flour corn, sweet corn, pop corn and pod corn. Nearly 82 million acres are planted annually in the U.S. with a yield of nearly three billion bushels. Feed for swine, cattle and poultry uses up to 85 per cent, and the remaining goes into production of starch, alcohol, corn syrup, corn oil, cornmeal and breakfast food.

Thanks to an invitation from a very charming fourth grade teacher, Mrs. Marsha Justmann,

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I was privileged to tell this story in part to her class, and to the other classes of teachers Nancy Lynn, Bea Mackey, Jan Coons, Terry Wiesz, Connie Charlland and Linda Bailey, at the Wentzville Elementary School East, on Friday, Nov. 18.

It was a rewarding experience to be back in school again, and with such a fine group of some 182 fourth grade boys and girls. They are certainly fortunate to have as their teachers the seven talented young women mentioned above.

The next day we were invited back to their Thanksgiving Stew. Tables were lined up and down the long hall, and delicious stew and cornbread were served. The stew was cooked outdoors in an open kettle by Dr. Frank Zeitz and Rick Mantione. The teachers had baked the cornbread, which was a marked improvement over the cornbread we had made before the classes the day before.

Friday, Marsha headed out toward New Melle with a large poster fashioned out of corn kernels, and signed by all the students. She never made it to our house. In dodging one of our water holes her car mired deep in the mud on the right side, and a flat developed on the left side. The old Thielmann Road back into the woods has claimed many victims before, so Marsha should not feel too bad. A new road is now scheduled, and when it comes we will miss the daily challenge.

Auctions continue in the area, and antiques, long discarded and forgotten in the attics, continue to attract the antique buyers. Local people have become accustomed to the high prices of useless, but still irreplaceable items. Nevertheless, every sale brings a few surprises. Few, though, can equal the little cast iron fire wagon sold at Willie Uhlmansieks' farm sale on Sunday, Dec. 4. The Uhlmansieks, who live on Highway D east of New Melle, had for years stored away items that had accumulated. One was a small cast iron fire truck with registered New Melle bred thoroughbreds. Willie received the toy from his parents on Christmas day in the early 1900's. His father had paid \$3.00 for it at A. C. Hoefner's General Store. Sunday it was sold for \$1175.00.

No. 200 DEC. 14, 1977



# Cracker Barrel News

9.16

## BICENTENNIAL BABIES

Two hundred years ago a new nation was born under the most difficult times. The chances for its survival in a hostile wilderness, far away from the protective arms of its estranged Mother Country, were very uncertain. Inhabiting this raw country then with sorely needed strong, healthy young people, was also most difficult, and only the strong survived. Brave, young, expectant mothers, always faced the possibility of some abnormal condition that may go undetected until the time she was to deliver.

There were no regular periodical visits to the highly trained obstetrician, no weekly training classes, no x-rays, no anesthetic except for the rolled towel to bite down on, and no hospitals. Babies were born in crude log cabins, and often with only the aid of an ill-trained midwife. Fortunately, the miracle of birth is one of the most natural events that repeats itself through the ages, and because of it the habitation of our young nation in 1776 grew in strength and numbers. Nevertheless, the mortality rate was extremely high.

Today every young couple can look forward to the birth of their children with a great deal of confidence, and quite a number of young couples in the New Melle community have done just that recently. It is time to introduce all of these Bicentennial Babies.

Steven Anthony Burt, son of Dennis and Bessie Burt, was born July 8 at Lincoln County Hospital, Troy. He weighed 9 lbs. 10 oz. His father works for Exxon in Wentzville, and for a number of years his mother was employed at Brown Shoe Co. in Clayton. Grandparents are Mr. and Mrs. Theo Burt and Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Ellermann.

Katherine Ann Pezold, daughter of John and Mary Ann Pezold, was born Aug. 28 at St. John's Mercy. She weighed 9 lbs. 8 oz. Her father is a hydro-press operator at McDonnell-Douglas, and her mother runs the Pezold Catering Service. The young lady

was christened Sept. 19 at Immaculate Heart of Mary, and named after her two grandmothers. Her sisters and brother are Cindy, Carrie, and Chris.

Gaberial Claude Wildschuetz was born Aug. 31 at St. Joseph Hospital. He weighed 7 lbs. 11 oz. His parents are Lennis and Debra Wildschuetz. Lennis is employed at Wildschuetz Bros. Trucking Co. Grandparents are Doris and Arthur Wildschuetz, and Mrs. Alice Roetteger. Gaberial was christened at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in New Melle.

Jeremy Michael Karrenbrock, son of Kenneth and Joyce Karrenbrock of Wentzville, was born Oct. 2 at St. Joseph. He weighed 7 lbs. 11 oz. Ken works for Star Oil Co. in Wentzville. Jeremy's grandparents are Ilene and Vincent Karrenbrock and Paul and Alice Schneider, all of New Melle.

Arron Christopher Lane weighed 8 lbs. 5 oz. at birth on Nov. 12 at St. John's Mercy. Arron's parents are Rick and Mary Lane who recently moved from New Melle to O'Fallon. Rick is employed with the St. Charles County Highway Dept. Grandparents are Fred and Lois Lane, and Alice and Paul Schneider, all of New Melle.

Andrew Scott Auping was born Nov. 22 at St. Joseph. He weighed 7 lbs. 8 oz. Andrew's parents are Dennis and Vickie Auping and he has a little brother, Matthew, age 4. They live in New Melle and Dennis is employed at McDonnell-Douglas. Grandparents are Alvin and Virginia Auping, and the christening dress worn on Dec. 19 at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in New Melle has served for three generations. Godparents were Barbara Auping and Scott Winkle.

Amy Lynn Vance was born Dec. 9 at St. Joseph. She weighed 7 lbs. 10 oz. Amy's parents are Richard and Marcia Vance of St. Charles. Richard is employed at Sears Northwest. Grandparents are Kenneth Vance and Mrs. Kathy Stewart, and Robert and Wanda Griewe. The Griewes are long time residents midway between New Melle and Defiance. Amy will be baptized Jan. 9 at St. Paul's Lutheran Church.

Matthew Allen and Michael

William Schiermeier were born Dec. 21 at Christian Northwest Hospital. Matthew weighed 5 lbs. 11 oz. and Michael weighed 5 lbs. 6 oz. Matthew's and Michael's parents are Thomas and Priscilla Schiermeier of New Melle. Grandparents are Bill and Jean Schiermeier of New Melle, and Clifford and Dorothy Farkas of the Weldon Spring area. The twins and their happy young mother came home Christmas Day. Their father plans to put them to work as soon as possible in the store.

Tyson Edward Stevener was born Dec. 23 at Missouri Baptist. He weighed 6 lbs. 12 oz. Tyson's parents are Dale and Cindy Stevener. Dale is employed at Browning & Farris Industries in St. Louis and he plans to train Tyson for the big leagues. Grandparents are Albert and Charlotte Stevener, and Ed and Ivory Hueffmeier. All are from New Melle.

Another Bicentennial baby not previously mentioned is Daniel Lawrence Payne, son of Lawrence and Patricia Payne of New Melle. He was born Jan. 29, 1976 at Missouri Baptist Hospital and weighed 7 lbs. 14½ oz. Grandparents are Mr. and Mrs. Cletus Payne of Wentzville, Mr. Denny of St. Louis, and Mrs. Zeiler of California. Daniel is a great-grandson of Mrs. Powlowski, a recent resident of New Melle. Daniel's father is a Security Guard at McDonnell Douglas Corp., and his mother is a housewife. He has two sisters, Cindy and Shawn.

No. 156 DEC. 27, 1976

9.16



## 9.17 A DIARY

A diary is nothing more than a history of ones personal life, and I have kept a daily diary almost continuously since school days. This may seem to be a strange idiosyncrasy, however, everyone will agree that journals in business, or minutes of meetings, or logs of ships voyages are important. But, isn't it true that a day in ones life is a very precious thing? They come and go so fast.

Some, of course, are unhappy or sad days, and we hope that time will dim the memory of them. The majority though, are happy, challenging, and rewarding days, that we would all like to cling to and remember for a long time. The diary then is a personal reference that allows us to capture, and bring back some fleeting episode in our lives. It can be used in quiet, reflective hours to turn back the clock as the brief descriptive notes jotted down years ago are read.

This subject came to mind a few nights ago while watching "Franklin and Eleanor". So much of the story that unfolded on the TV screen was made possible because a chronological series of events, conversations, and impressions, were carefully recorded. Eleanor herself was an avid diarist, and readers may recall her famous "My Day" series that ran for years in hundreds of newspapers across the country.

The historical accounts that appear often in this paper of our pioneer ancestors could bring us so close to their hearts that we know were filled with love, hope, desires, and determination if only they had written of their experiences. They were born, they were married, reared children, crossed a treacherous ocean in a sail boat, followed some trade, conquered a wilderness, and died, and most of the time that is all that is known.

So, look forward to each precious day of your life. Make the most of every minute of it, and let the pen keep it for you, and yours, to treasure for all time.

## 9.18

### MUDDY ROADS

Muddy roads prior to the automobile was a normal condition everywhere, with the possible exception of some major streets in large cities. The mud posed little hardship because a good team of horses could pull the wagons through. When the automobiles arrived, gravel was hauled out of creek beds in horse drawn wagons and dump-

ed onto the wagon wheel ruts. A one man operated scoop with two handles in back, was hitched to a horse for any minimum grading that had to be done. The scoop held about one yard of dirt.

Gradually the roads improved. Equipment became more mechanized, and gravel roads permitted motor driven vehicles to move to and fro even after heavy rains. Asphalt and concrete followed, and crushed rock, spread smoothly with modern dump trucks could quickly provide anyone with an all weather road.

Today impassable muddy roads are practically non-existent, unless one happens to live in a land locked location where the only way out is through a new sub-divided development, and where a bumpy old rock road gives way to wide, freshly graded right-of-ways.

We were alright until the rains came. After that it simply meant walking back and forth until the hot sun sucked sufficient moisture out of goeey clay. Finally the road bed was ready for rock, but the night before delivery another two inch down-pour came. We gave up walking and stayed at the family home-place with very hospitable cousins for a few days.

It doesn't do any good to grumble over such inconveniences. The developer, who will soon be my neighbor, had hoped to get this beautiful road completed last fall. Now it is almost August. Someday when the road is finished we will only remember other opportunities and pleasures that replaced the inconvenience.

It was an opportunity to more fully appreciate what it may have been like when pioneers were isolated far back in the woods without any mode of transportation.

Much more than that, however, it was an opportunity to put up hay and drive a tractor, for us to have long talk sessions with the relations, to examine family photos and papers that date back to the early 19th century, to trace our ancestors, and to sleep in my grandparents high four post bed. Their pic-

tures, some 14 inches square, taken at least 75 years ago, and fitted into those typical large gold gilded frames, hung on the wall above.

As I gazed at their strong willed, handsome old fashioned countenances I could not help recalling the stories how they sailed the Atlantic together in a small vessel during the early German immigration days, how they settled in the New Melle/Cappeln area, were married at an early age, and began raising a large family near the Warren County line in what was then nothing more than a log cabin separated by a "dog trot."

No. 230 Jul. 19, 1978

## 9.19

### SHARE THE FUN

Seventy-eight years ago a young rural school teacher (Miss Jessie Field) in Page County, Iowa, conceived the idea of a 3-H Group for young boys and girls interested in agriculture. The 3-H symbol stood for Head, Hands and Heart. In Miss Field's school, agriculture took its place in the regular course of study with the basic "3 R's." In 1910 she and her club members designed a 3-H clover pin to give youths who had done well with their farm projects. In 1913 "Health" was added, and thus the 4-H clubs were formed. Mrs. Jessie (Field) Shambaugh died in 1971 at the age of 89. Today her first school, Goldenrod School, is a 4-H shrine in Page County.

There were other acts, however, that had set the stage for the eventual success of the great 4-H Club movement. In 1862 President Lincoln signed the Land Grant College Act, sponsored by Congressman J. S. Morrill. Agriculture up to this time was anything but scientific. Now agricultural schools could be financed by the sale of public lands. Missouri immediately approved of the plan. In 1870 agriculture became a division of the University of Missouri. In 1887 the Hatch Act provided for farm experimental stations. Such

9.17-9.18 & 9.19



progressive acts in the interest of American agriculture soon established a firm base for farm youth to demonstrate their skills. 4-H clubs began to play an important part in molding young men and women into future leading citizens. Their records in 4-H club activities were recognized, and opportunities were continually being opened to them.

The clubs were built on a simple idea, that is: that each member would elect to assume a responsibility and carry it out at home in line with basic needs. Each member would raise a calf, preserve the family food supply, and beautify a room or home surroundings. In doing so he, or she, would use approved practices and methods. The objective was to provide a practical education for boys and girls.

On March 26, 1948, a group of young people met at the Oak Dale School on Morrison Road and formed the Calloway Community 4-H Club. Charter members were Manvel Holt, president; Raymond Freese, secretary-treasurer; Alice Freese, song leader; Elwood Amrein, reporter; James Amrein, Lavon Schmidt, Dianna Ramey, Herbert Pierce, Jimmy and Glennon Schroer, and Fernlane and Wendell Welge. Mrs. Mabel (Freese) Busdieker and Mrs. Mildred (Becker) Schnarre were present as adult leaders.

From this nucleus of 12 members the club has steadily grown. Today, with 99 members, it is the largest in St. Charles County. It is also an extremely active club. Their record book is full of completed projects, plus numerous State and County Recognition Certificates. The majority of its members live in the area north of New Melle, south of Wentzville, and between roads "T" on the west and "DD" on the east. However, they have always considered New Melle their home base. The club wants to continue meeting in New Melle, although some difficulty has been experienced in securing a permanent meeting place in town. It would be a loss to our town if the club is forced to go elsewhere.

For years the club has held an annual "Share The Fun" banquet, followed by a program in which most members participate

as club and project leaders, in demonstrations, and in entertainment. I was privileged to "Share The Fun" with the Calloway Club Sunday evening, April 23, at St. Paul's Lutheran Hall, their 30th anniversary celebration. Good food, and clever skits provided the fun part of the evening, however, there was also plenty of education built into the evening's program. As an observer it is understandable why this particular club has progressed so far.

Training is one of the main objectives of the 4-H movement. The quality of this training is especially evident as the business meeting rolls on through a long list of reports and demonstrations. These young people are to be commended on how business like their meetings are conducted. Robert's Rules of Order are followed to the letter. Charter Member Dr. Raymond Freese should take some credit here because he has been stressing proper business meeting procedure for some time.

Charter Members Dr. Freese, Alice Molitor and Mrs. Busdieker were present for the 30th anniversary. They have remained leaders down through the years.

Year after year dedicated adult leaders have stepped forward to steer the club to greater heights. This year, with Nell Widowski at the head, and Dorothy Harris and Don Bowman as assistants, is no exception. They have been doing a remarkable job. Other leaders include Mrs. Cheryl Jett and Mrs. McClain on the Skits, plus there are 37 Project Leaders.

Club President Beverly Ann Molitor presided throughout the meeting.

No. 219 MAY 1, 1978

9.20

#### ORAL HISTORY AND FOLKLORE

Oral History is a recording of some event, or some experience, as spoken orally by the individual who actually attended the event or who witnessed, or participated in something that happened in the past.

Oral History can also be recorded from individuals that can

re-tell accurately the true stories they may have heard from either their parents, grandparents, or acquaintances, who are no longer living.

Folklore refers principally to folk dances, songs, games, superstitions, habits, beliefs, forecasting by certain signs, ways to plant, harvest, make, fish, hunt, treat oneself to cure ills, etc.

Information of this type is obtained by listening to conversations or taping interviews of particular senior citizens who have a vivid recall of what life was really like in earlier years. An attempt has been made in previous issues of the Cracker Barrel News to record early history of our particular area, and we have yet to scratch the surface.

As time permits, a much more concerted effort will be made to re-capture the life and times of our pioneering ancestors in this "Daniel Boone," "Osage Indian," and "German Immigrant" part of St. Charles and Warren Counties. Readers who are interested in local history and folklore are encouraged to submit their stories, or to recommend people who have had interesting backgrounds.

A letter received a few days ago from Dr. A. E. Schroeder of the Department of Germanic and Slavic Languages of the University of Missouri-Columbia, along with an enclosure entitled "The Immigrant Experience-Oral History and Folklore Among Missourians from German and German-Speaking Groups" precipitated the above remarks, and added a renewed emphasis on the importance of recording such history and folklore for posterity, and for the pleasure of present and future generations.

In the papers Dr. Schroeder clearly points out the significance of the German immigration in this particular section of Missouri. German settlements like Augusta, Wentzville, New Melle, Dutzow, Capeln and Schluesburg are mentioned; the life and writings of the famed Gottfried Duden, who settled down as a gentleman farmer near Dutzow, is discussed;

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