

This Was The Annual School Picnic of Dallas Borough

Cigar Store Indians

(Continued from Page 9-T)



Who are those two Little Lord Fauntleroy's on the front row, with their dark suits and wide white fuffed collars? Pretty cute. And that timid little girl with clasped hands standing next.

That's Floyd Hileman in about the middle of the front row, and to his left, in the wide sailor collar is Arthur Rice. Third from the left with the big Windsor tie, hands thrust debonairly in his pockets, is Lyman Ryman. Fifth from the left is Ruth Mott. Floyd's little sister Rita is on the front row, too.

The first graders stood in front, and the rest of Dallas elementary school pupils in the back, according to age and height, when they posed for the photographer at Fernbrook Park, after they had eaten their picnic lunch.

Now, it's all yours. The tight knee

pants on the boys, and the dresses well below the knee on the little girls, should give you some clue as to the year. Recognize the teachers?

The Mason-Dixon line was set up a century before the Civil War . . . At least 20 countries have borrowed the tune of "God Save The King" for their national anthem . . . The proprietor of a Shenandoah, Iowa seed store wins our week's award for originality with this sign: "After planting our seeds, step back quickly" . . .

Andrew Johnson's wife taught him to write when they were courtin' (he was 17) . . . F.D.R. vetoed the greatest number of bills—631 . . . For years, Presidents have had at their disposal a private Pullman car, armor-plated with bullet-proof windows . . .

Enjoyed that sign in a Philadelphia store's toy department: "Shoplifters will be spanked" . . . Just when do you think 2,000,000 visitors broke Florida's monthly attendance record? Last July . . .

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Mr. Titman, now in his middle sixties, was, until a heart condition slowed his pace, a familiar figure at every country auction in the east. He still goes to them, but there is hardly any need; for he has most of the priceless weathervanes, Indians, and brass handbells, right there in those two pine-panelled rooms in Tunkhannock!

He probably knows every collector of consequence in the east, and they know him, and get in touch with him when a really important item comes up for sale anywhere from the Canadian border to the Mississippi.

He is a genial, modest man, whose pleasant smile is his trademark—and whose gracious conversation is a hallmark.

Mr. Titman is not a dealer. Since the day he started his collection with a small figure that fell off a junk man's wagon in New York—until today—he has never sold an item he collected!

Maybe that's why his collection includes more than 200 brass handbells, ranging from a foot to a half inch in diameter. That's also the reason why one whole side of his building gleams with a hundred bells from firehouses and steam operated fire engines.

But these are nothing compared to his collection of weather vanes, many of which are priceless. Weathervanes similar to his have sold for as much as \$2400 in New York galleries; and he has a standing offer of \$1,200 for a belled Guernsey cow, not by a long shot, the most valuable in the collection. That distinction belongs to an upright copper Indian, bow in hand, a facsimile of the great seal of Massachusetts—the handiwork of some unknown Yankee craftsman!

The largest weathervane is a seven-foot Mercury that stood atop a Baltimore medical college until high winds blew it down and fractured its leg. Mr. Titman's artisans did a better job than the Baltimore surgeons who thought it was crippled for life and sold it. You would never know now that Mercury once was earthbound with a broken leg.

Most of Mr. Titman's weathervanes were in bad shape when he bought them, but like everything else in his collection, have been restored to perfect condition—and all gleam from constant care and attention.

Many as he has, there is still another he would like to add—an Angel Gabriel blowing his trumpet!

Sometime ago he heard from a Corning, N. Y. collector that there was such a six-foot Angel Gabriel in Bristol, Tennessee. Mr. Titman grabbed his plaid cap and started south! But the Bristol Gabriel was a miniature, eighteen inches, six feet from base, overall. It was a disappointment, but the trip was worth it; he picked up some other leads. Someday an Angel Gabriel will blow his trumpet above the collection on Slocum Street!

Perhaps the most spectacular are the cigar store Indians. All are beautifully colored and made of metal, many of them by the famous Demuth & Company foundries in New York City.

Cigar store Indians, or more properly cigar store figures, were most popular in the 1860's. Many were of wood but those that stood in front of the most exclusive shops in New York City were of metal and custom designed.

Mr. Titman's collection is so spectacular that Life Magazine sent a photographer to Tunkhannock to take pictures for its Americana series.

The staffer wanted the figures removed from the building so that he could take individual shots against a plain background. Mr. Titman refused. Some of his figures weigh 1,000 pounds. Getting one out would require moving tons of others! Mr. Titman could get along without the publicity, risk of breakage and extra labor! LIFE would have to get along without its pictures!

Not long ago, the famous Parke Bernet Galleries in New York sent word that a Texas author was writing a book on cigar store figures. Since Park Bernet never reveals the name of a buyer, they suggested that Mr. Titman get in touch with her and tell her that the figure he had purchased from them was in his collection at Tunkhannock—a Joan of Arc holding a clutch of cigars.

He invited her to Tunkhannock and some months later she arrived. With some pride, he was anxious to have her see his collection.

Like a traveller to Mecca, she gasped when she saw Joan, squatted reverently on the floor in front of her and for two hours said nothing—soaking in her beauty. She never did get around to the rest of the collection before train time. Joan, just as she appears in the lower left of the Post's picture layout, will be included in her forthcoming book.

All types of collectors visit Tunkhannock. Industrialists, society matrons and nostalgic visitors who want to catch a glimpse of America's Heritage from bygone days.

For them there are the quaint store signs such as the burnished copper Regal Boot like the one top right in the Post's layout that once swung dangerously in front of shoe stores. Or the polished brass pretzel surmounted with the royal crown, top left of layout, that beckoned customers to a Vienna Bake Shop, once the favorite of the Emperor.

There are dozens of deceptive high silk hats, that no moth will ever challenge, for they are made of iron. They once graced the entrances to exclusive tailors' shops.

Then there are the life-like figurines that stood in front of packing plant offices, miniature iron steers, pigs and sheep; or the urchin hungrily consuming a plate of food, the trademark of an exclusive New York restaurant. A detail is shown right center of the Post's layout, while the entire figure is in another group picture on the same page.

Most visitors are intrigued by the scuffling bronze child that can't make way with the flopping rooster in its arms because rooster is tethered with a string to a tiny brass cannon, and the string is cutting the youngster's groin. Who wouldn't howl? Lower right center of layout.

But for those who want a cigar store Indian to be a real Aborigine, none of the figurines compare with the life-size delicately hued feathered Indian and his dog that Mr. Titman obtained from the Drexel Estate. Shown lower right in the Post layout, it is a magnificent piece of workmanship and probably one of the most valuable pieces in a collection that is modestly appraised at more than \$100,000.

To see it, you need pay no fee; but you should call Mr. Titman for an appointment—if you would like to keep a rendezvous with the Indians who didn't exactly name Tunkhannock "the meeting of waters" but who, nevertheless, are bringing it fame.

by HOWARD W. RISLEY

'Hong Kong means "Frangrant Harbor" in Chinese . . . In Phoenix, Ariz., the Administration Committee of the Arizona Senate issued this directive: "Senators who have no secretaries of their own may take advantage of the girls in the steno pools" . . .

In Des Moines, Iowa, a faculty directive to young nurses at Iowa Methodist Hospital reads: "The uniform skirt may not be shorter than two inches below the popliteal space." That's the back of the knee . . .

The call of the marine toad—a deep, booming trill—is sometimes mistaken for a far-off tractor . . . Members of a fifth grade in an Omaha (Neb.) school call themselves "The Unteachables." Their teacher is Miss Ness . . .

Although more than half of the Presidents were in military service during their lifetimes, only three—Monroe, Hayes, and Kennedy—were wounded in battle . . . The average life span of the 30 deceased Presidents was 68 years and 181 days . . .