

Why Do You Do Like You Do? . . . History Has the Answers

By Bill Murray

What do you really know about yourself? Whence come the customs that are so ingrained in your nature that they govern your actions, your beliefs, even your clothing?

You might be surprised to know that some of our familiar gestures come down to us from ignorant savages who were more nearly apes than men, and others from the gallant knights of the Age of Chivalry.

For instance, do you know why April Fool's Day is our day for jokes? . . . Well, it all started back in 1564, when Charles IX of France decreed that the New Year should begin January 1st instead of April 1st. Those who objected to this change became the butt of many jokes, some of which have come down to us today. The French called the persons they fooled "poisson d'avril," meaning "an April fish," or a young fish, easily caught.

Why does O.K. signify approval? . . . It was October 6, 1790, when the expression was first so used. On that date Andrew Jackson "proved a bill of sale, which was O.K." in the court records of Sumner County, Tennessee. The probable source of the expression is the Choctaw word "Okeh," meaning "It is so and in no other way." Today dictionaries recognize this customary expression for showing approval as a part of our language.

We don't light "three off a match." Why? . . . During the Boer War (1899-1902) the British soldiers started the custom of avoiding three lights from one match. They found it dangerous enough to light ONE cigarette at a time, foolhardy to light TWO, and to light THREE was sheer suicide. Three lights gave the Boer sharpshooters time to set their sights and fire. Today the custom still persists.

When meeting you "shake hands." Why? . . . Before the dawn of history, one of man's most natural customs had its beginnings in a simple gesture. By dropping his club or stone war ax and extending his empty hand, primitive man showed that he was unarmed and peacefully inclined. From this crude manner of inspiring confidence in early times comes our handclasp of today.

You wear buttons on your coat sleeves. Why? . . . Frederick the Great (1712-1786) took great pride in the appearance of the Prussian army. To stop the men from wiping their faces with their sleeves, the soldier-king had a row of buttons sewed on their uniform sleeves. From this old custom, therefore, comes the present style of sewing buttons on men's coat sleeves.

A "baker's dozen" means thirteen. How come? . . . Well, more

than 500 years ago in the city of London, bakers were required by law to give an extra loaf with each twelve that were sold. Thus the customer was assured of getting full value and the baker avoided the risk of being fined for short weight. From this old law comes the present-day "baker's dozen" meaning thirteen.

Who started this custom of shaving, and why? . . . Although the earliest instance of shaving is not known, as early as 300 B. C. Alexander the Great made shaving a universal custom among his Macedonian soldiers. Long beards, he observed, were too convenient for the enemy. The Persians had a distressing habit of grabbing a soldier by the beard and neatly slicing off his head. So Alexander's men were ordered into battle minus their whiskers.

Many people call their wages "salary." Why? . . . In the early days of the Roman Empire, salt, then a rarity hard to obtain, was regarded as being almost as valuable as gold. Roman soldiers received all or part of their pay in salt. This salt stipend was termed "salarium," whence comes our present-day word "salary" meaning pay for services rendered.

Of course, you wear a band on your hat. Why? . . . When Knighthood was in flower it was considered a gallant gesture for a knight to wear his lady's scarf on his helmet when he sallied forth to perform deeds of valor. From this custom and that of the ancient Egyptians of wearing a head-band to keep their hair in place, comes the band on men's hats, an accepted style of today.

Brazos County Day At Flower Show To Be Sat., March 2

Saturday, March 2, has been chosen as Brazos County Day at the National Flower and Garden Show in Houston, according to an announcement made by Mrs. L. L. Fouraker, chairman of the local flower committee, and Mrs. C. B. Campbell, hostess for Brazos County Day.

Something Snappy in Football Fashions Back in 1894



Above is the first Texas Aggie team ever to play the University of Texas, the giants of 1894. Shown in the picture are Dr. Charles Puryear (wearing derby), then faculty manager and now dean emeritus; F. D. Perkins (holding ball), captain and co-captain; Harry Jordan (in cadet uniform with cane), team manager; R. W. Burleson, John Burney, William Krug, J. L. McGonagill, J. C. McNeil, H. Chiles, W. G. Mossenberg, H. F. McDonald, W. Lane, Milton Simms, H. Martin, C. Carson, M. McMillan, and J. Childress.

Dean Gibb Gilchrist Speaks in Oklahoma

"The Engineer's Complex" was the subject of a talk made by Dean Gilchrist of the School of Engineering before the Oklahoma A. & M. Chapter of the American Society of Civil Engineers in Stillwater, Oklahoma, Monday evening.

Educator Reports Gains of American Schools During '39

CINCINNATI, Ohio. — Nearly one-fifth of the full time enrollment now in American colleges and universities is represented in the 119 institutions in the east-north-central states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin, according to Dr. Raymond Walters, president of the University of Cincinnati and nationally-known statistician in the field of college attendance figures.

Full-time students in this area represent an increase this year of 3.18 per cent, well above the national increase of 2.7 per cent, Dr. Walters reported in his twenty-first annual survey of enrollment in 648 colleges and universities.

Throughout the nation there are 873,697 full-time students as against 822,891 last year and 1,323,874 grand total, including part-time and summer students—1.8 per cent more than last year's 1,259,973.

The country's largest universities are California, where 26,004 full-time students rank it first in this classification and 31,932 students rank it second in grand totals; and New York University, where 12,745 full-time students rank it sixth in this classification and 36,880 students rank it first in grand totals.

The state of North Dakota reported a gain of 11.64 per cent in full-time students, the largest percentage increase in the country. At the other extreme is the state of New York, reporting a percentage loss of 1.99 but maintaining its first-place rank in collegiate population with 96,967 full-time students.

Examining national trends, Dr. Walters states: "Of special interest is the measure in which independent colleges of arts and sciences give evidence of enrollment recovery.

"The attendance of 236,915 full-time students in 401 such colleges is 3.4 per cent larger than last year. This exceeds the gain of 2.5 per cent recorded by 55 universities under public control having 275,458 full-time students and the decrease of 1.3 per cent in the 184,766 students attending 51 universities under private control.

"As to freshmen entering upon liberal arts courses, the independent colleges likewise recorded a gain over the universities. Engineering freshmen show by far the most significant increase, 34.1 per cent.

"The largest full-time gains are 7.8 per cent in 71 teachers colleges and 6.5 per cent in 48 technological institutions. As to geographical distribution it may be said that enrollment increases are widespread."

Bedouins of Northern Sinai Include from One to Three Wives Among Their Few Possessions, Seldom If Ever Work

An Aggie Tells of His Adventures in the Near East

(Editor's note: This is another in a series of stories dealing with the trip taken by two Aggies—John Pranglin and the writer, A. C. Bassett—through Europe and the Near East, to do geophysical work for an oil company in Egypt.)

By A. C. Bassett

Nov. 15, 1938

We are now camped in the purely sand dune country of northern Sinai, near the Palestine border. Our camp is located among the date palms on the shore of the Mediterranean and it makes us feel that we are wintering at a winter resort. We have a fine beach and it is still warm enough for swimming and doubtful that there will be many days when it will be too cold.

The country in this area is very difficult to work; one huge sand dune follows the other for miles and miles. The dunes slope up gradually for a quarter of a mile or so and then drop on the leeward side for as much as 100 feet. This drop is made at about a fifty-degree angle. We are able to traverse this country in cars equipped with doughnut tires by gaining as much speed as possible on the gradual "up-slope" and plowing through the soft crest. As the car drops over the crest onto the steep down-slope it causes a small landslide in the soft sand and rides it to the hard surface at the bottom—and on to the next one to repeat the procedure. It's fun and quite a thrill as you come over the crest but a little dangerous.

And believe it or not, this wilderness of sand is inhabited by tribes of Arabs known as Bedouins. Webster defines the Bedouin as "a desert dweller; a nomadic Arab"—and take it from me, he is a nomad "from way back."

Breaking into the notes here but my interest in the Bedouin later prompted me to attempt an article on his life and it appropriately fits in at this point. It follows in part:

Unlike the oil exploration clan, the Bedouin does not call on the modern outside world for a helping hand in his subsistence but lives on what he finds and produces in the desert. It is believed he can live on a few crumbs of bread and a cup of goat milk per day.

The average Bedouin's possessions are a donkey or a camel or both, a small herd of goats, one of two half-tent windbreak affairs woven from mohair, a half-dozen chickens that lay pea-sized eggs (the only size egg that any chicken in Egypt ever lays), and from one to three wives. Beds, chairs, or any other form of furniture is unknown to him. As for cooking utensils, he may have a bucket for brewing coffee and a small skillet.

It seems that the one fortunate enough to have two windbreaks keeps one wife along with his camel and chickens in one, and another wife along with his donkey and goats in the other.

The Bedouin very seldom if ever works. His wives or children herd the goats over the almost bare desert and fetch the water from the nearest bir or oasis. In rainy

years, he plants or supervises the planting of a small patch of grain. The soft sand is plowed with a crooked stick shaped like the beam of a walking plow but having only one handle. The plow is drawn by a donkey or a camel. After sowing by hand, he never touches it until harvest, if there is one. It is rumored that he inwardly hopes there will be none as it would require more work. It appears that prosperity means absolutely nothing to him, whether he eats well or not at all does not seem to concern him in the least.

The Bedouin's food consists of bread, eggs, goat milk, coffee, and dates in season. The bread is principally a mixture of flour water, goat fat, and salt. This mixture is poured directly upon a hot bed of coals and covered with the same. After it's cooked, the ashes and sand are knocked off by a slap of the hand, leaving an ample supply of grit to make it almost inedible for an ordinary man.

The Bedouin's coffee is far different from any known to the average American. The coffee bean is toasted very crisply and then put into an earthen jug and crushed to a powder with a blunt wooden pin. This powder is boiled in water and drunk, dregs and all.

The Bedouin, both men and women, are small of stature. The majority of the men are less than five feet, ten inches tall. A few of them are trimly and huskily built but on the whole they are scrawny and undeveloped.

The men dress in a long gown of rather heavy-weight cotton cloth, a headdress consisting of a scarf draping over their head and thrown back over their shoulders. This scarf is kept in place by a double-cord band having the same effect as a hoop and canvas over a water barrel. His shoes, if any are sandals. For no apparent reason, he usually carries a sword or hunting knife, though he has very little use for either.

The small stature of the women is about as far as the casual observer can comment on their physical appearance.

Texas U. Making Plans for College Boxing Tournament

Plans are being made for a Boxing Tournament for college boxers to be held in Austin, probably March 19 and 20. The tournament is being sponsored by the Longhorn Boxing Club of the University of Texas, with the support of its Faculty Committee and the Longhorn Band, and will be conducted under intercollegiate and state regulations.

All capable and eligible boxers in Texas colleges and universities are invited to participate in the contest. As the tournament will be conducted under intercollegiate rules, only amateurs whose physical condition is certificated will be eligible.

Exactly 91 per cent of the Concordia College (Minn.) student body are Lutherans.

DAIRY TEAMS PRACTICE FOR JUDGING CONTEST

The Dairy Cattle Judging Team spent the past weekend doing practice work at the Heep Jersey Farm at Buda, at Hildebrand's Rio Vista Farm at San Antonio, and at the Luling Foundation Farm at Luling. This work is preparatory to the Intercollegiate Dairy Cattle Contest to be held at the Southwestern Exposition and Fat Stock Show at Ft. Worth on March 11. The team is composed of J. K. Adams of Tulia, C. F. Baird of Carrollton, B. B. Fowler of Rockwood, E. L. Pierce of Goldthwaite, and N. B. Yarling of Rosenberg. Professor A. L. Darnell, coach of the team, accompanied the boys on the trip.

The Dairy Products Judging Team is also preparing for these contests, which will be held at Ft. Worth on Tuesday, March 12. This team is trained to judge milk, butter, ice cream and cheese. The members of the squad are Jack Calhoun of Sherman, H. L. Dalton of Mt. Pleasant, G. F. Hagler of Joshua, D. F. Erwin of Ft. Worth, H. R. Sloan of Denton, and N. B. Yarling of Rosenberg. Professor A. V. Moore is coach of the Dairy Products Team.

Mathematics Club To Be Organized Here

There will be a meeting of all students interested in forming a Mathematics Club at A. & M., Thursday at 7 p. m. in room 212 of the Academic Building, Robert Reed Lyle, instructor in the department, has announced.

The purposes of the club will be to foster interest in questions concerning mathematics, to discuss advances and problems of the mathematical sciences, and to carry on other such activities as the organizers wish.

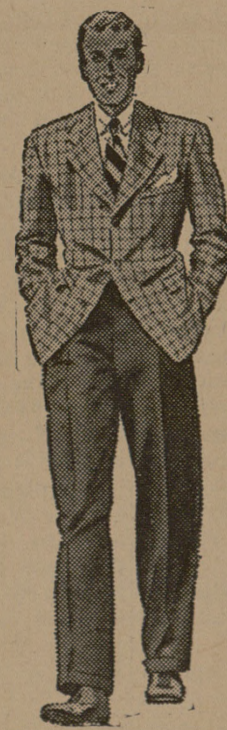
All those interested in finding out more about the formation and purposes of the club should see Mr. Lyle.

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Pork Chop or Roast (End of Loin) 1 lb.	.18

Vegetables

Wine Sap Apples, 1 doz.	.15
Texas Oranges, Nice Size, 1 doz.	.15
Fresh Carrots, 2 bunches	.05
Lettuce, large heads, 2 for	.09
Cabbage, hard, 3 lb.	.10
New Potatoes, 3 pounds	.10
Avocados, 2 for	.17

Groceries

Quaker Puffed Wheat, 3 boxes	.20
Corn Kix, 2 for	.25
Libby's Pineapple Juice, 3 cans	.22
Trappery's Cut Stringless Bean, No. 2, 3 for	.25
Concentrated Super Suds, 2 P. O. soap	.25
Peaches, large halves, No. 2 1/2	.15
Libby's tomato juice, 3 for	.22
Yacht Club Corn, white or yellow, 2 for	.25
Armour's Corn Beef, large	.19
Ideal Dog Food, 3 cans	.23
Oriole Peas, No. 2 can	.15
Admiration Coffee, 1 lb. can	.25
Admiration Coffee, 3 lb. can	.74
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