

THE GAB BAG

By
ALAN BROWNING, JR.



HOW TIME DOES PASS

We were over at the high school one day last week to make a picture of the graduating class, and what with all the bustle and excitement among the seniors we were vividly reminded of the year long gone when we were a senior.

Although we have reached the stage where our joints set up a faint creaking when we move, we still feel young in spirit. Still, when we count back, we can't deny it has been 17 years since we received our high school diploma.

Seventeen years! Why when we were graduating some of the seniors of Elkin's class of 1940 weren't even born. Others were sporting three-cornered pants. Yet it doesn't seem so awfully long ago.

Back in our day seniors didn't go in for gowns and caps like they do these days. But our class room teacher was sort of swanky and had high faluting notions, and she told us we would have to have a cap and gown to graduate in.

We didn't know just exactly what she meant, but figuring whatever she said was okay, we didn't ask any questions. And for a long time we wondered why everyone in the auditorium laughed when we paraded onto the stage to get our diploma, attired in a split-tail night shirt and night cap. A night shirt was a gown as far as we were concerned.

Oh, well, what difference did it make? Those were the days when we didn't have all the modern inconveniences that beset us on all sides these days. Those were the days when a fellow had to study Latin whether one wanted to or not. We rode three ponies to death dividing Gaul into the necessary parts, and we were in full sympathy with the guy who did in Caesar.

It's a part of commencement for the seniors to sort of do as they like, and it seems that all seniors gang up and ride around quite a bit in automobiles during school hours on commencement week. We did, too, but instead of riding around in modern autos with their steering column gear shift, knee action and soft plush seats, we toured Main street in a T-Model Ford. And white flannel pants and blue coats were the order of the day.

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In our day there wasn't a war going on in Europe ready to engulf all young men of 18 and over, but we had already been through one World War, with its accompanying hardships and excitement, and everyone said that such a war would never come again. We studied about the World War in history, our senior class did, and it wasn't hard because we all remembered the actual facts. Unfortunately, the history of the present war hasn't yet been written.

But we ramble on like an old man. Maybe we should sprout a long grey beard in keeping with the tone of our writing. But seeing senior classes come and go, and knowing that graduation ends one of the happiest periods of a person's life (but try and tell a senior that), we gaze with troubled eyes and wrinkled brow upon a future that holds for them, and for all of us, a horizon shrouded with dark clouds of war and uncertainty.

We don't mean to be an old kill joy, but we can't help but feel that one of these days the United States is going to get messed up in the war in Europe. We have read that many high officials in Washington have quit wondering if the U. S. is going to become involved. What they are wondering now is how soon?

The first World War didn't seem so serious to us at the time, but we'll never forget how worried we were when news reached us that the Germans were within 30 miles of Paris. That was before the U. S. got in, but we felt sure, once the Kaiser took Paris, his troops would head for the United States. Then, when America became involved, we remember how anxiously the daily casualty lists in the morning paper were read by those with relatives and friends in France. And we vividly remember getting the news that a young man who was in high school while we were in grammar grade, had been killed in action.

Ah, yes, children, those were perilous times. How would you feel trying to sweeten your coffee with Karo syrup or stick candy? It didn't do so good. Or eating bread made from a half and half portion of flour and meal?

Then came the first influenza epidemic. Funeral processions passed home in steady streams. People died like flies. And everyone who was well went about the streets with gauze masks strapped over their nose and mouth, like a surgeon just getting ready to operate.

But there was plenty of excitement, too; excitement cut out for a boy 12 years of age. It was going out to the depot to watch the boys depart for camp. Some would be in uniform. And local bigwigs, too old to be eligible for active service, would pass around boxes of cigars to the soldiers, and there would be a great amount of flag waving and speeches, mingled with the tears of parents and other kin left behind.

And then there was the fun of gathering on the grassy lawn of the old Masonic Lodge and watching the home guard drill in green uniforms and with dummy guns. They made a great show of it, but just who and what they were to guard against we never did quite get figured out.

Then came the news of the armistice, which we remember celebrating by cutting three somersaults down a grassy bank in

front of our house. The war was over!

Ah, what memories an old man has. An old man who is 35.

PLEASE BEAR WITH US
That's the way with us. We start out writing about graduating classes and wind up all exhausted after going through an entire war.

We hope you seniors will bear with us, for after all we have no reason to wish you anything but a future that will contain a minimum of life's sorrows.

Time starts moving fast when one graduates from high school. You'll be surprised how rapidly the years will roll by, each one treading upon the heels of the other. And these years will bring a responsibility as yet unknown to you.

Other senior classes will come and go. May we express the hope that you, Class of 1940, will go far along the road of happiness, and if you find happiness, your life will be a success.

And now, if you don't mind, we're going off somewhere and enjoy a good cry.

"One Million B. C." At Elk Monday, Tuesday

Put Hal Roach's new prehistoric film spectacle, "One Million B. C.," down as the next picture you will run—not walk—to see. The new production will be shown next Monday and Tuesday at the Elk theatre where it will be unreel under the auspices of United Artists. Aside from being sheer entertainment on every count, "One Million B. C." is an outstanding screen achievement and adds another laurel to the brilliant career of Producer Hal Roach.

Co-starring Lon Chaney, Jr., Carole Landis and Victor Mature, "One Million B. C." tells a simple story of two prehistoric tribes—the Shell People and the Rock Tribe—who live their lives under the shadow of attack by huge dinosaurs, woolly mammoths, musk oxen, terrifying reptiles, and seething volcanoes. How a common danger serves to end hostilities between the two clans is told vividly and movingly while animals of monstrous size crawl

from their lairs and close in upon the hardy cavemen.

"One Million B. C." is spectacle at its biggest and best. The screen is literally dominated by huge prehistoric beasts, and the earthquake scenes leave one breathless with their force, sweep and power. Other unforgettable scenes show Lon Chaney, Jr., cast as Akhoba, the tribal leader, mauled and gored by a huge beast, his body lacerated and mutilated, one leg broken and shriveled.

Needless to say, "One Million B. C." utilized the newest and most up-to-date technical secrets in achieving such outstanding verisimilitude in the spectacular animal sequences which were filmed on location in Fire Valley, Nevada, described as a fiery gash of grotesque caves, chasms, peaks and pillars.

A new screen star in the motion picture firmament appears in the picture when Peter the Python makes his slithering and impressive screen debut. Peter is 22 feet of Reticulated Python from the far off jungles of Sumatra. He weighs 175 pounds on an empty stomach.

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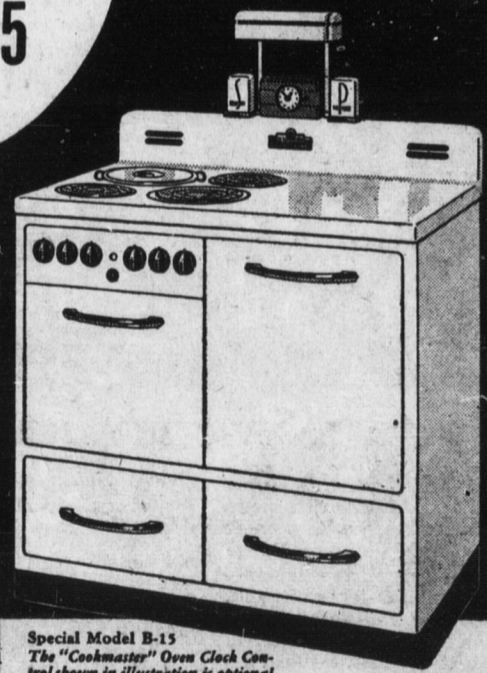
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