



THE GAB BAG
By ALAN BROWNING, JR.

ABOUT A VARIETY OF THINGS, INCLUDING A GHOST

The other day a lady from Boonville who was in Elkin on business, saw us in a local office and recognized us from the picture at the head of this column. "Until today," she said, "I didn't believe it was real. Always thought it was just something comic."

The good lady didn't tell us that, but we overheard her through a thin partition. Then we went off in the corner and had a good cry.

Last week, in going back into the dear long gone days of our childhood, we forgot to tell about the day we went into the haunted house. This house, located just a half block or so from our house, had stood silent and empty for over a hundred years. At one time it had been one of the town's nicest places, with a well ordered lawn

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attractively edged in boxwood, and with well groomed shrubbery here and there. But the passing years after death had robbed it of its owner, there had been no hands to trim the shrubbery or keep it in order, and at the time of which we speak the grounds had grown into a tangle of high grass, high shrubbery and the boxwood hedge towered many feet into the air.

The old house, in this dark, dreary setting, seem to brood over the lost grandeur of long gone days, and cooing pigeons, who

frequented its eaves, made a ghostly sound at the close of day.

We had been on the front porch of the home lots of time, looking into the dim interior through blue stained glass windows which gave the interior a ghostly bluish hue that made the sheet draped furnishings take on an unreal appearance. Then one day, becoming a little bold in the presence of a friend, we playfully lunged against the front door as if we were going to break in. You could have knocked us over with a tooth pick when the door, its hinges creaking, opened!

What would you have done if you had been in our place? Would you have entered this long dead house that had stood just so for a hundred years? Sure you would, so we did too.

At the end of the front hall was a beautiful curving stairway that led to the upper floor, and as we started toward it we couldn't help remembering the legend that was linked with the house. It was said that a very lovely young lady had once lived there, but had been killed in a fall from her horse. Since then the house had been closed as she had no near relatives, but there were a number of colored folks who had sworn they had seen her on dark rainy nights sitting in one of the front rooms at a spinning wheel. And each time they had seen her, they had noticed the fragrance of perfume in the air.

Of course no one believed this story, for no colored person thereabouts would have gotten close enough to the house to even peep in the window, much less stick around smelling perfume. But we couldn't help thinking of the story as we, and our friend, made our way slowly toward the stairway. You see, legend also had it that the young lady's room had been on the second story, and that in it was a life size oil painting of her. We wanted to see if

FLOCK RECORD GOOD PRACTICE

Figures On Feed Costs and Production Will Prove of Much Benefit

Poultryman will find that keeping records on the flock as to production and costs of feed and other supplies will give much valuable information to the grower, says C. J. Maupin, Extension poultry specialist at N. C. State College. He points out that this is particularly necessary at this time because of the high cost of feed.

"Contrary to the prevailing opinion, demonstration flock records show that the highest average returns above feeding costs are secured on these flocks in the spring of the year when egg prices are often the lowest," reports Maupin.

Many growers ask about the feed cost of producing a dozen eggs. The records show that this was lowest in March, April and May, when egg production was highest. The highest cost of producing eggs came in October, November and December when the average production was low and egg prices were high. The average feed cost was 21 cents per dozen during the winter as compared with 12 cents in the spring.

According to Maupin, the records clearly show that good breeding and proper flock management pay excellent dividends. High production per bird means low cost of production per dozen eggs. Cull hens have no place in the laying flock, especially when feed costs are high.

In managing the flock, many growers find it good practice to keep two-thirds pullets and one-third hens. Other poultrymen prefer all of the flock to consist of pullets. "Provided good young stock can be raised or purchased each year, this may prove more profitable in commercial blocks," comments Maupin.

this was so, and if so, if she was as beautiful as legend had it.

Then we got the shock that stunted our growth! For as we were going up the steps, we suddenly heard the sound of light footsteps running up the stairs, passing us, and fading into the gloom at the top of the landing. Then, as our blood sort of congealed, we heard a light, musical laugh, and — believe it or not — heavy in the air was the scent of perfume!

Brother, our friend and us reached the front door in one jump and did one hundred yards down the street in nothing flat. Then we paused to take stock, and as both of us had heard the sound of footsteps and smelled the fragrance of perfume, yet saw no one, we decided to say nothing about the matter for fear folks would say we were lying.

Later, when time had somewhat dulled our fear, we decided to go into the house again. This time we started up the stairs with our heart in our throats, but nothing happened. At the head of the stairs was a long hall, at the far end of which was the door to the room the girl's picture was supposed to be in. On the floor was what had been a red plush carpet, now yellowed with age and dust, and over it we walked on tip toe toward the room.

Cautiously opening the door, we were met with a gust of stale air from the darkened room, whose shutters had not been open for a hundred years. Then, slowly we entered and began to fumble with a candle we had brought along. Getting it lighted at last, we looked around the room, and there, on the wall to our right, was the picture!

You've never seen a girl more lovely even in a technicolor movie. She was standing beside a marble bench, dressed in a blue evening gown of the period which featured hoop skirts, and the very sight of her was enough to take your breath away. As we stood and gazed in awe, we couldn't help but think of the sound of footsteps we had heard on the stairs that other time, and the fact that they had died away down the long hall leading to this room!

Suddenly, as if pushed, the door behind us slowed swung shut and we were instantly aware of the smell of perfume, and a slight rustling sound, as if someone (maybe wearing a hoop skirt), had passed us. Then we noticed that the girl in the picture seemed to be looking straight at us.

Next, with a suddenness that left us paralyzed with fear, something, or someone, blew out the candle!

(This is a heck of a place to run out of space, isn't it?)

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Today, we all owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to men and women in the uniforms of Uncle Sam's fighting forces. They're on duty today at the four corners of the earth and on all the seven seas—protecting our lives and our way of life. And we mustn't overlook the splendid job that other men in the uniform of our police forces are doing. Their "zone of operation" may be North Carolina rather than North Africa, it may be the highway to the next town rather than the airways across the Pacific, but their job is fundamentally the same — protecting us and ours.

We North Carolinians can indeed be proud of our police organizations — city, county or state. Most of us have few occasions to call upon the service of our police forces — but that in itself is a tribute to their efficiency. They're on the job day and night, whether we need them or not.

Some of us in the Greyhound organization, because of the nature of our work, have more frequent occasion to cooperate with the police than do many of our fellow citizens of North Carolina. For instance, we are in a position to see clearly how much the police of this community, as well as those of neighboring communities, have contributed to the safety and convenience of bus transportation. The aid these men have given in arranging the most practical and satisfactory routes through towns and cities is typical of their skillful handling of all traffic problems.

Greyhound's most important job, as we see it, is to make near and good neighbors of all the communities that our buses serve in North Carolina — and we feel that the able cooperation of police forces throughout the State has made it possible for us to do this job with greater efficiency.

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