

Uncle Ab From Abington — January 12, 1977

By Jim Jones

Friends of ours from Dayton, Indiana were down a few days ago to help see the New Year in, and brought an interestin' artifact from bygone days. Rummagin' around in the attic of the funeral home, Mike found an ol'time weddin' announcement all done up in a fancy frame. Here was real Americana. The whole outfit measured some 14 inches by 20 inches and bore the pitchers of the bride, groom and preacher. It was complete with engravins of doves, fancy carvin's and Biblical passages which implied the bride was supposed to do what the husbin tole her to an what God had joined together let no man put asunder. The blanks were filled in with ol' fashioned script an' ol' fashioned brown ink an' stated the weddin' had occurred in Tippecanoe County Indiana on Christmas Day 1875. All very proper and touchin'.

We took the thing apart to wipe a century's accumulation of dust and grime away an' found the basic document was a stock item probly sold or given away by the' photygraffer. Oval cutouts in the main document had paper pockets glued on the back side to accept the pitchers of the participants. The bride and groom had their pitchers taken in LaFayette (sp) by a photygraffer on the corner o Fifth n' Main streets, where the ol' Monon railroad runs down th' middle of Fifth St. and causes traffic tieups even yet today. Th' parson wuz a big city feller, havin' been photygrafted in Indianapolis by a compny who wuz in th' upper floors of a big skyscraper type buildin' since an engravin' of the buildin' wuz shown and proper letterin' stated you could ride an elevator to the studyos. Part of the engravin' showed a horsedrawn streetcar in front of the buildin' so we knowed it wuz old.

We cleaned up the hole thing and hung it in a place of honor in the sittin' room, jest over th' thermometer fer the furnace. It makes a fittin' addition to an ol' house and goes well with a couple other ol' time artyfacts of similar design excep' these, are funeral announcements, with ol' fashion doves an' other sech embellishments.

All this leads one to note that the folks in Grandfather's time put a lot o stock in weddin's and funerals. No doubt folks who had to look at their weddin' pictures includin' the preacher ever' day would be less apt to throw in the towel when things got tough. The low divorce rate a century ago seems to bear this out. An' no doubt seein' the proper solemn funeral pitcher on the wall served to remind one that the dear departed was still aroun' in sperrit if not in the flesh. Mebbe a return to th' old way of doin' things would be a good ideer an' keep folks in line,

At any rate, it makes interestin' readin' and lookin' on snowy winter days. Wonder whut happin' to the folk pitched in the of' walnut frame.

Seed catalogs comin' in--time to plan the spriag plantin'. Less than a month to Groundhawg Day.