

MAGIC



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The heads decorating the first page were clipped from the playbills of magicians who appeared between 1830 and 1870.

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Your Ladies' Night entertainer started his magic career in 1920 at the age of 9. Since then he has performed thousands of times- at churches, schools, colleges, hotels, theatres, clubs, town halls, nightclubs and convention halls- from one end of this country to the other, as well as in Europe and many islands in the Pacific. He pioneered magic on television and industrial trade shows.

As a member of the Hermit Club for some 25 years, this stage is very familiar to him; so it is appropriate that he concludes his career here before one of his favorite audiences.

MARCH TALK ON HARPERS FERRY

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Our speaker at last month's meeting was Dennis E. Frye, who reviewed the siege and capture of Harpers Ferry by Confederate forces under Stonewall Jackson. His talk was sparked by many interesting sidelights on some of the individuals involved.

Union Colonel Dixon S. Miles received a lot of attention for his actions in putting up such a poor defense and surrendering the entire 14,000-man garrison and great stores of military supplies. He was killed by a shell fragment on the day the white flag was raised, and thus never had to face the harsh judgment of a later military commission that he had been "incapable amounting to almost imbecility."

One of the interesting facts brought out by Mr. Frye was that after the Confederates had paroled the Federal captives, the U.S. Army interred these men in prison camps, which resulted in several mutinies.

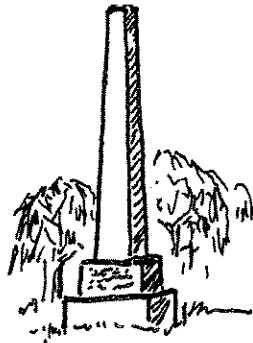
The Battle of South Mountain at Turner's and Fox's Gaps was on the same day the Confederate bombardment began at Harpers Ferry. This was only three days before the Battle of Antietam took place.

It was a well-organized talk and much enjoyed by those attending.

"Now You See It"

A program of magic and mind reading has been presented 96 times at the G.E. Lighting Institute at Nela Park in the past 25 years.

Civil War death trap still draws mourners



The recent brouhaha over President Reagan's visit to West Germany - whether he must visit the site of a concentration camp there - reminded us of a clipping from the Los Angeles Times that has been on file for some time.

This article was about the "Andersonville of the North" - Ft. Delaware State Park, on the small Pea Patch Island in the Delaware River. A total of 33,565 rebel prisoners passed through, 12.5% of whom died (as compared with 9.5% of Union prisoners who died at Andersonville). Mention Ft. Delaware and most southerners will know what you are talking about.

Thousands of descendants of the 2,436 soldiers who died there still visit Pea Patch Island during the tourist season. Stories of the suffering - from scurvy, smallpox, pneumonia, malnutrition, crowding, and freezing - have passed down through generations, making this place difficult to erase from memories.

Superintendent of the Ft. Delaware Park stated in the article that many of the people in Delaware City, a town of 2,000 that is just a five-minute boatride from the island, have never visited the prison.

"They don't want to come out because of what happened," he said. "I get men here in the summer in the work crew, but the place bothers them and they quit after a few days."

When prisoners died at the fort, their bodies were transported by boat to the New Jersey side of the Delaware River and buried in trenches at a place called Inns Point. A towering granite obelisk marks the spot, and at its base are the names of the Confederate soldiers in the common grave.

A 12-foot deep, 30-foot-wide moat surrounds the prison's granite walls. The Confederacy never attempted a raid because there was a mechanism for flooding the cells with river water in the event of an attack.

"I think they would have pulled the plug," Superintendent Armstrong mused, "feelings ran pretty high in that war"

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Fred Gill's Book Review will appear in the next issue, which will be the "mid-summer edition" sometime in July.

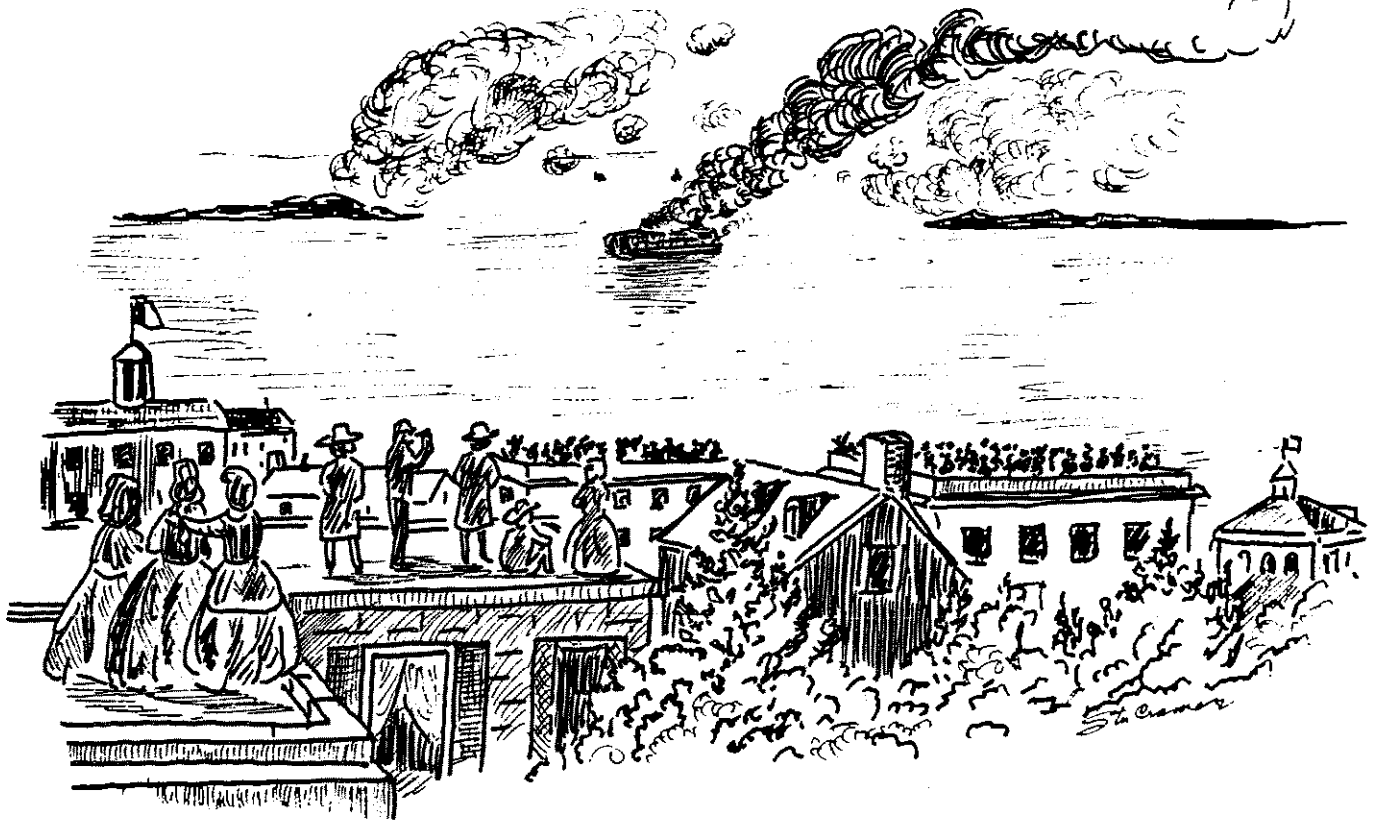
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Dr. S. Weir Mitchell of Philadelphia said, "Twenty deaths a day of dysentery and the living have more life on them than in them. Thus a Christian nation treats the captives of its sword ... a thousand ill, 12,000 on an island which should hold four." This was a year before Andersonville was established and took place just below flourishing Philadelphia on Pea Patch Island in the Delaware River. Horrified and sympathetic citizens of Delaware were jailed by a federal provost marshal when they attempted to relieve the Southern prisoners' suffering.

From a Jacksonville, Fla. paper

SCENES I'D LIKE TO HAVE SEEN

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At 4:30 a.m., April 12, 1861, a signal shell burst over the parade ground at Ft. Sumter and immediately Confederate guns encircling the island fort opened, and shot and shell smashed into the silent Charleston Harbor bastion. The bloodiest war in our history had at last commenced.

For weeks before this event anxieties had built up during the jockeying of political forces over the momentous question of what the new administration of the United States was going to do in the face of seceding states threatening to fight unless the fort was abandoned. A striking feature was the ease with which the Union had surrendered other southern forts, arsenals, hospitals, etc., without the intense emotions that raged around Sumter.

Such incidents had been passed over by the Buchanan administration without being treated as acts of war. But Buchanan had refused to evacuate Sumter in compliance with the demands of South Carolina. The new President Lincoln inherited this problem, which grew to the point that Peace hung upon this trigger. If the U.S. held out, the South would become inflamed with all-out war.

The bombardment lasted 34 hours, with the guns of the fort, manned by a tiny garrison of 80 men, answering slowly and deliberately. Hot shot had set fire to all the wooden buildings and partitions, and clouds of smoke curled above the fort amid the crack and bursting of shells as the Confederates redoubled their efforts. The smoke seeped into the casemates, and the fire from Sumter slackened as its gunners, kerchiefs bound over their faces, lay gasping on the flagstone floors for want of air.

Although the answering fire from the fort was cut almost to nothing toward the end, as each of its shots rang out, the Confederates at the surrounding batteries cheered the gallantry of the stout defenders.

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SCENES I'D LIKE TO HAVE SEEN

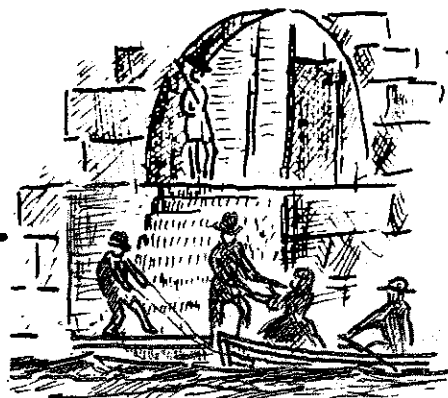
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Although more than 3,000 shot and shell had been hurled at the fort, not a single man was killed on either side.

At 7:30 p.m. surrender came and honorable terms were accepted by both sides. During the height of the engagement, hundreds of Charlestonians watched the pyrotechnics from rooftops. It was a scene I'd like to have seen.

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One of the many dramatic incidents that took place during the period leading up to the opening of hostilities was the visit of Mrs. Anderson, invalid wife of Major Robert Anderson, Commander of Ft. Sumter. She was in New York with their children when word came of the extremely perilous position of the garrison. In the company of Peter Hart, a faithful friend and sergeant who had been with her husband in Mexico, Mrs. Anderson traveled without intermission for forty-eight hours. Stopping at the Mills House in Charleston she was met by her brother. They had no difficulty in procuring a permit to visit from South Carolina Governor Francis Pickens, an old friend of their father's.



A small boat carried them out to Sumter, where the Major greeted his wife with open arms. She stayed two hours, then was rowed back to the city. Leaving Sergeant Hart to care for her husband, the intrepid lady departed that same evening for Washington and arrived at Willard's Hotel, insensible from exhaustion. She had accomplished what the U.S. Government had failed to do - take reinforcements to the beleaguered fort.

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COW STORY Cont'd from QLLAPODRIDA

biggest and "best" Holsteins walk rather the way camp followers used to when smuggling whisky to troops during the Civil War. Which is how? Well, those were the days when dresses reached the ground. Men, even military police, knew it was highly improper to lift anyone's skirt. So the camp follower would put a pair of suspenders on under her dress - and from them she would suspend a five-gallon can of whisky, which hung between her legs. Naturally this gave her a somewhat waddling walk. That's more or less how Holstein cows look, once they have made bag."

Civil War Smiles



"When does one stop being a Civil War 'buff' and become a Civil War 'nut'?"

This cartoon was sent in by member Bill Stark. No source was given.

PERRYVILLE-RESULT OF BUM GENERALSHIP

Under a blistering hot sun, waves of Confederate infantry stormed the Federal positions lining steep hillsides on the bluffs overlooking the Chaplin River near Perryville, Kentucky, in the largest battle on Kentucky soil. Only a few miles from Washington County Courthouse where Abraham Lincoln's parents were wed, and from the site of Thomas Aquinas Academy in St. Rosa, Kentucky, where Jefferson Davis attended preparatory school near the home of his grandparents, black clouds obscured the close and bitter fighting.

The Battle of Perryville was a strange anomaly, a fluke even for this war. The two sides blundered into each other nearly fifty miles from where they expected each other to be, and in the middle of a drought, found themselves fighting over the precious little water left in the river. Union General Buell had 60,000 troops in the immediate area, but let the 32,000 he committed to a



two mile front got whupped by 16,000 Confederates under General Bragg. Realizing he was outnumbered, however, Bragg withdrew during the night - and retreated all the way through Cumberland Gap into Tennessee.

The North could not believe that Buell had failed to destroy the Confederate Army: the South did not forgive Bragg for consolidating his victory and giving strategic Kentucky to the Southern cause... it was the last chance to swing that state into the Confederacy. It was as if two giant beasts had brushed dumbly against each other in the night and had gone their separate ways. It ended Buell's career and should have ended Bragg's.

The Battle of Perryville saw Kentuckian pitted against Kentuckian, and here, more than anywhere else, brother fought brother and father fought son. Few major battles occurred throughout Appalachia after the Battle of Philippi, West Virginia, with the exception of the Battle of Lookout Mountain at Chattanooga, and fighting in the hills stayed mostly in the bushwhack and guerilla category.

From an article in the Mountain Spirit. Thanks to member Ray Channock

Don't Believe It

WASHINGTON — The assassination of Abraham Lincoln 120 years ago was the unintended result of a desperate Confederate plan to snatch victory from the jaws of defeat at the end of the Civil War, researchers said yesterday.

The reinterpretation of events surrounding Lincoln's assassination April 14, 1865, detailed in an unpublished study, challenges assumptions that John Wilkes Booth was an aberration. It theorizes instead that he and other Confederate agents were well-funded and working full-time in Washington.

The Civil War researchers contend that the Confederate government developed a campaign in the waning weeks of the war — including a planned attack on Lincoln or the White House — that they believed

would have ensured at least a stalemate.

Later the Confederacy, seeking to avoid any direct links between itself and Booth, encouraged speculation that the assassin's actions were an aberration.

The study was prepared by James O. Hall, a historian and former Department of Labor official; William A. Tidwell, a retired CIA officer and Army intelligence general, and David W. Gaddy, a Department of Defense analyst.

The researchers said Confederate secret operations were to be coordinated with last-ditch military maneuvers by Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee. Lincoln was shot five

days after Lee surrendered. But it said Lee's withdrawal cut off communication to Booth and the assassin was left not knowing that an attack on Lincoln was no longer needed to win the war.

NORTON I EMPEROR OF THE UNITED STATES

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Joshua Abraham Norton, a young Englishman, arrived in San Francisco on the steamer Franzika in 1849 from Algoa Bay, Cape of Good Hope, with \$40,000. With that stake he proceeded to make a fortune in land speculation, agent for mercantile houses and broker, becoming a respected citizen worth a quarter of a million dollars. But in 1853 he overextended himself trying to corner the rice market, and after long excruciating litigation was broke. Ruined, he dropped from the city's life, and his mind became warped.

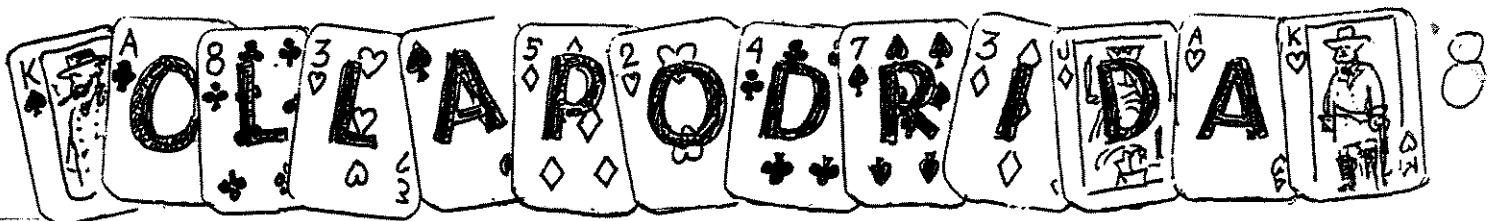
In 1859 he appeared in the office of the San Francisco Evening Bulletin, resplendent in a fancy uniform and submitted a proclamation, "At the peremptory request and desire of the majority of the citizens of the United States, I, Joshua Norton...declare and proclaim myself Emperor of these United States."

Amused by the unusual feature story, the editor ran it without comment. Subsequent proclamations abolishing Congress and the State Supreme Court for fraud and corruption caught the public fancy, and the city, used to kooks and eccentrics, went along with the gag.

Decked out in elaborate uniforms he appeared in public, and applying himself as diligently to being emperor as he had as an entrepreneur, Norton continued to issue proclamations for the progress and justice of his empire. He attended public gatherings of all kinds and with great dignity accepted the ironic bows of his subjects. He refused to recognize the Confederate States of America and ignored the war in the east.

For twenty years the citizens of San Francisco supported his delusion. His imperial bonds - usually issued in the amount of 50¢ - were honored, and the modest taxes he levied were paid. He ate and drank free at the best restaurants and saloons and was invited to speak at political rallies. When the State Legislature met, a large upholstered chair was always reserved for him. Tailors who made and contributed uniforms proudly announced on window cards "by appointment to His Majesty." When the inevitable do-gooders attempted to have him committed, judges dismissed the inquiries into the Emperor's sanity - he was too much a public pet.

He died in January, 1880. As he lay in the morgue, a crowd began to gather, and the San Francisco Chronicle headed an article "Le Roi Est Mort." Thirty thousand attended his first funeral. In 1934, fifty years later, he was reburied at Woodlawn. A fine granite monument was set in place; it read: Norton I, Emperor of the United States, 1819-1880. As one historian noted there were no quotation marks around the inscription.



THE DEVIL'S BIBLE

This was first published in the New Jersey Journal, Dec. 27, 1780. Supposedly an American Revolutionary soldier was hauled before his superior and charged with being caught in a game of chance with a deck of playing cards. He was dismissed after his clever explanation of how he used the cards as a Bible and almanac. Your ed. first encountered it 40 years ago in a magic book advising magicians to use it when criticized for doing card tricks.

"When I see a ^(ACE)One, it reminds me that there is but one God; a two, of the Father and Son; a three, of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; a four, calls to my remembrance the four evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John; a five, the five wise and foolish virgins; a six, that in six days God created the heavens and the earth; a seven, that the seventh was to be kept holy; an eight, of the eight righteous persons that were preserved from the flood, viz.: Noah, his wife, his three sons and their wives; a nine, the nine ungrateful lepers cleansed by our Saviour; a ten, of the Ten Commandments; the queen reminds me of Queen Sheba, who came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and the king, of the great King of Heaven." The colonel told him he had forgot the knave. "That," replied he, "used to represent Judas; but from this time, when I see the knave, I shall always think of the sergeant who brought me before your honor." . . .

The soldier then continued as follows: "When I count the number of dots on a pack of cards they are three hundred and sixty-five, for so many days there are in a year; when I reckon how many picture cards are in a pack, I find there are twelve, so many months are there in a year; when I reckon how many tricks are won by a pack, I find there are thirteen, this reminds me of the duty I owe to the thirteen United and Independent States of America. Thus they serve both for Bible and almanac."

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The famed 1863 "lost" Lincoln check, which the President made out for \$5, to a "colored man with one leg," was recently sold at an auction. The legendary check appeared only once, in a photograph accompanying an early Lincoln article by Ida Tarbell, and disappeared. Two Denver women brought it to Sotheby's, explaining that it had been given to their grandfather as security for a loan that was never paid. Even before the Tarbell photograph, the check had obviously been tampered with, by cutting out the signature and substituting it with another Lincoln signature from another check written on the same bank (Riggs & Co.). Despite this condition, \$17,600.00 was paid for the famous check.

Thanks to the Bushwhacker

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Fiery Confederate General "Jo" Shelby, who led a small army into Mexico after the war to settle there, eventually wound up back in the United States to become a U.S. Marshal in Kansas City...and voted Republican.

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Judah P. Benjamin, former Confederate Secretary of State, following a daring escape after the war, carved out a brilliant new career in England. With an assist from his friend Disraeli, he built up a law practice from nothing to an income of some \$250,000 (in 1985 values). He wrote a textbook used well into the 20th Century - Benjamin on Contracts - at law schools here and in England. From The Long Surrender by Burke Davis, 1985. (Recommended)

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Excerpt sent in by Fred Gill from Third Person Rural, by Noel Perrin:
"Anyone who has seen a Holstein milker (many people haven't, because once grown Holsteins are often confined in a barn for life)* - any such person knows that here is an animal that has been bred into distortion. A Holstein cow is basically a support system for an udder. So much so that the
(* true only in specialized dairies - an old cow expert)

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