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Papa Lyman Remembers
from page 79

the road rather than in their proper pasture, all
patrons of the same party line had the news. If
the Joneses were visiting at a home on a differen-
t line — it was only necessary to tell “Central”
where to ring. Which brings up the “ring.”
Each patron had a separate “ring.” Two longs
and one short could be the Jones’ ring and one
long and two shorts would be Smiths. Of course
this system put “Central” in the position of a
monger if not outrageous gossip. Naturally there
would be a tendency to distort, exaggerate or
even falsify. But on the whole the system worked
and helping hands were much more evident than
hindering hands.

In looking over a reprint of the May 1953
issue of “Consumer Reports” chiefly concerned
with 1953 automobiles, I observe that several
popular makes are no more— these include
Hudson, Nash, Studebaker, Packard— If in 1953
a reader would have researched auto brand
names of the mid twenties over two hundred
makes would have been missing — This issue of
Consumers also evaluates record changers and
cassettes — no CD players—. Movies
which scored highest in May 1953 were Walt
Disney’s BEAR COUNTRY; COME BACK
LITTLE SHEBA, with Shirley Booth and Burt
Lancaster; HIGH NOON, Gary Cooper and
Cicely Jordan; MOULIN ROUGE, José Ferrer
and ZaZa Gabor. They don’t make em like those
any more!

Several legacies of the thirties and forties are
still with us; included are End of Prohibition;
The Work Progress Administration (WPA). In
spite of shovel leaning workers as they labored
on building bridges and public buildings, many
of which are still in use, the Writers Project
created State histories most of which are still in
print and all are in demand by state history schol-
ars. The Civilian Conservation Corps put thou-
sands of unemployed, hapless young Americans
able to work in forestry, conservation, state and
federal park improvement; many of which projects
are flourishing today.

Some country boy memories— A wood
burning cookstove with a hot water reservoir.
Saturday night bath in a galvanized wash tub.
Facts of life learned from older boys. When
my brother and I were advised by these teen
age know-it-alls of the human method of procreation,
we vehemently disavowed such procedure on
the part of “our” parents; after all our father was
a preacher. Having used that word, I have cho-
sen not to bother my readers with the PK
(preacher’s kid) litany— I have always pitted
kids who lived in large cities without having gone
through some country or small town living. I
ever learned to ride a bicycle — ponies and
horses were plenty for me. Before the day of
consolidated schools and their buses country kids
walked or rode ponies to school. By high school
time they had access to an automobile to “get in
to town” — and that meant more opportunities
to have a car for an important date. Drivers’
licenses were non existent — speeding tickets
were unheard of — even if your car were capa-
cible of 60 mph, where could you find a road
that wouldn’t shake you and your car to pieces
after 45 mph? Although boozes were not unknown
to autodrivers during Prohibition, DWI was an
unheard of occurrence. For a teenage fellow to
get the family auto and tool around the “Square”
at 3 mph meant that other guys would envy him
and girls would pay attention to him.

As I wind up these memories, the TV and
radio “business” reporters are blabbering about
on-line retailers and mongering the promises
of rectifying delinquent 1999 blunders. My ques-
tion is how long can these vendors continue
hoodwinking investors as well as customers?
HAPPY NEW YEAR!