

POTPOURRI

Recipes/Remedies

RECIPES

Local women have passed tidbits of domestic wisdom from mother to daughter throughout the years. Unfortunately, much of that knowledge has been lost somewhere in the process. The following is a hometown collection of recipes and remedies that have survived the test of time.¹

Queene Pudding

One pint of bread crumbs to one quart of milk – one cup of sugar. The yolk of four eggs beaten. The grated rind of a lemon. A piece of butter the size of an egg. Bake until done but not watery.

Whip the whites of the eggs stiff and beat in a teacupful of sugar in which has been stirred the juice of one lemon – spread over the pudding a layer of jelly, or any sweetmeats you prefer. Pour the whites of the eggs over this, and replace

in the oven. Bake lightly. To be eaten with cold cream.

Green Corn Griddle Cakes

Grate 12 ears of green corn just right to boil; add two teacups of sour milk, one teaspoon of soda, one of salt, two eggs, and thicken with flour to the required thickness.

Salad Dressing (Gregory's)

4 eggs well beaten
1 tablespoon mustard
1 dab cold butter
a teaspoon salt, ½ pepper
8 tablespoons sharp vinegar

Put altogether in a pail and set in a kettle of boiling water, stirring constantly, until it is quite thick. Then pour into another dish – let it stand until cold then reduce with thick cream.

An "Excellent" Indian Pudding

1 quart scalded milk and about 1 cup (scant) Indian meal. 1 cup molasses (some like ½ cup better), salt – a little ginger or cinnamon. First as you put it in the oven add 1 pint cold milk – this forms the jelly.

Bake six hours slowly.

Oatmeal Cookies

Mix 2½ cups dry (rolled) oatmeal with 2 teaspoons baking powder. Into another bowl put 2 eggs slightly beaten with 1 cup sugar and 1 teaspoon vanilla extract. 1 tablespoon melted butter and a little salt.

Mix thoroughly with the oatmeal and baking powder, spread thinly on well buttered tins (11 by 17 pan) and bake in a moderate oven for 20 minutes. Cut into squares as soon as baked.

REMEDIES – Pests

The outright destruction of insects is one way of alleviating their inconvenience; however it may not be the most humane or even the most effective means of dealing with the little creatures. They are a part of the land and if not acceptable as such may be ignored, avoided, or controlled by the introduction of natural predators. The rather brutal tactics employed by our foremothers were representative of the times in which they lived; these women thought they were staving off disease and filth in their struggle against the insect world.

Ants

Ants are one of my worst pests but [I] have lessened their number somewhat by finding their nests of homes and pouring on boiling suds.



As to ants, several times I caught them forming a procession up the porch, in the door, [and] around to the closet. It stopped right there each time and never fails. Common household ammonia, full strength, sends them back.

For ants it is trapping with sweetened water and freshly gathered tansy put in cupboards and such places and in their run ways. I tried it last summer in an office that they had taken full possession of, they were destroying books and papers and even the building itself and after a few weeks I could not find one.

I used ground cloves freely on all shelves under papers, on floors under barrels, etc., even on window sills in [the] kitchen, and have never had any further trouble. This is so simple, non-poisonous, and really not unpleasant as to odor, that I always pass it along.

Bed-bugs

I once moved in a house that was literally filled with bed-bugs. I stood the beds in cups of kerosene to keep the bugs from crawling in the beds, drew the beds away from the walls, then I saturated the walls, floors and every part of the house with gasoline which kills the nits [insect egg young] as well as the bugs and went over the mattresses and beds every few days with gasoline to make sure there were none in the beds. This is a positive cure for them as I got rid of them, but you must be thorough and always on the lookout for them as long as there are any in the house.

Bed-bugs can be quickly exterminated by using quicksilver [mercury] mixed with the white of an egg and put around the places with a feather, . . . about the size of a large drop of mercury to an egg.

[I] burned the bedstead, tore off [the] wall paper and painted and papered anew, washing walls with alum water and have seen none since.

My nearest approach to success in the matter of bed-bugs is through everlasting vigilance with any amount of turpentine applied with a brush . . . Success depends entirely upon persistent effort.

Carpet beetles

The carpet beetles have been troublesome and the only remedy I used was to sprinkle insect powder, tobacco or salt under the carpet. The effort always seemed successful.

We have used ground cloves with success around carpets to keep away carpet beetles.

Checked carpet beetles by pouring gasoline around [the] border of, [the] carpet where they were.

When we build I'll not have a floor covered by a carpet. And in that happy time there will be no sharp corners or crevices that any evil thing can hide in. Every closet shall have light and air and all heavy furniture shall be on rollers and carpet beetles shall be no more a dread for they will be unknown.

Miscellaneous bugs

Plant lice (red spider) – Wash the leaves with soap suds and sprinkle each once a week.

Mosquitos – We have found by experience that to use lime either in a spraying mixture or sprinkled dry under the piazza [porch] and in dark or damp places near the house abates the mosquito nuisance in addition to spraying with kerosene wherever there is an exposed water surface.

Squash & Pumpkin Bugs – Take two shingles or two piece of board, put one board on top of the other and raise one end of the top board an inch or an inch and a half by placing a prop under it. During the night the bugs go under the top board to keep out of the dew. In the morning before the sun is up go out and pull out the prop and mash the bugs between the boards.

Head Lice – The hair tied up in a strong solution of camphor three nights in succession will utterly destroy lice. School children are exposed to this pest and a clean remedy cannot be unwelcome.

Sketches

All sorts of stories for and about women fill the pages of old Ithaca newspapers, now collecting dust in the basement of Olin Library at Cornell. When finally taken down and laid bare, these stories come to life, and vividly express women's place in yesteryear.

The following are some colorful examples.

The Role

We must remember that we are women made for adornment as well as use. (1908)

It is remarkable how quick the ladies bring out their parasols. For our part we think the sun feels too good to wish to shield ourselves from its rays. But then we are not afraid of freckles, and that may make a difference. (1875)

For the benefit of our freckled sisters we would say, that a pint of sour milk and a quantity of horse-radish mixed together and used as a wash three times a day until the freckles disappear, is said to be a sure cure for these blemishes on the cheek of beauty. Will some of our lady readers try it and report how it works? (1875)

Important to Ladies – A very considerate medical writer begs to inform the fair sex that by too active a use of their fans, they check perspiration which produces pimples, and an actual change of the complexion. (1828)

Coasting [sledding] may be an invigorating exercise but it will never be a graceful amusement for girls. (1879)

Swimming has become very popular among the ladies. We believe every boy should know how to swim, but we are of the opinion that the old lady's advice to her daughter, — "To hang her clothes on a hickory limb, but not go near the water," is the best that could be given to those girls who wish to become mermaids. (1875)

[There is a young lady in Ithaca] who is so modest that she will not go into the woods until the bare limbs of the trees had been clothed in verdure. (1875)

Let no girl give her "likeness" [photograph] to any man unless he is a relative. It is holding herself in very cheap estimation to do so. What, pray, is left for her real lover, when he comes if so sacred a gift be on another man's table, to be gazed upon by his chance — and sometimes not

very choice acquaintances? Many a young girl who has thoughtlessly committed herself in this way would afterwards give worlds to recall the foolish gift, which has been prized only as a matter of boasting. (1871)

When all is said, no man wants to see his own wife or daughter doing too much promiscuous dancing. That tells the whole story. Men don't so much object to dance with other men's wives and daughters; but no true man wants his own wife and daughters to do too much miscellaneous dancing with other men. (1875)

* * *

Have you ever observed that when a lady slips on the sidewalk she gracefully sits down, and that's the end of it? A man, however, always tries to catch himself on the other foot, drops all his bundles and, using his arms for a balancing pole, struggles desperately for about ten seconds, and claws the air in a vain endeavor to recover his



Gathering violets in the spring.

equilibrium, and finally goes sprawling like a collapsed windmill. (1875)

* * *

Ladies who suffer from special diseases peculiar to women, should consult this eminent specialist. Angular, disproportionate women will, by recovering perfect health, gain that well rounded, symmetrical figure so much desired, yet too often beyond their grasp for the want of the right medical advisor. (1909)

* * *

Would it not be more praiseworthy in a school-mistress, to instill into the minds of her fair pupils the necessity of industry, than to tell them they "ought not to learn housework"? I think, if she has neglected that necessary branch of female education herself, she may be puzzled to get
A Good Husband (1823)

Bath has a female coffee brigade to do duty at fires. Why don't Ithaca have one? Then, when an alarm is sounded, the fire laddies would fire up the engines and the fire lassies would fire up the coffee pots! Such an organization, with its apparatus, would also be an attraction on parade and would help to draw a crowd at the Firemen's Convention in August. We commend this suggestion to the earnest consideration of the Ithaca Fire Board. (1878)

* * *

A Cornell co-ed writes to her friend:

I do not expect to return to Ithaca. I am more disappointed than I can tell, Phebe, but the fates are against it. Mother is not well enough to be left alone and though I have conceived an innumerable number of plans she will not consent to my going and I shall try to reconcile myself to

the inevitable hoping that sometime somewhere I may be permitted to do what I like. (1879)

I have often thought it was a mistake that nature made me so small and weak, with all a man's ardor and enthusiasm pent up in my heart, and this wild fancy which would soar so far away, and beyond my poor strength. (1865)

* * *

It is curious how the clerks on State St. will run to help a pretty girl out of a wagon. It was no longer ago than yesterday, that we saw three of them rush out of the same store - one held the horse, another put down the carriage top, while the third and most fortunate assisted the young lady to alight. (1875)

Whatever else you may abuse, never abuse a woman. Always remember you had a mother; perhaps you have a sister; maybe a wife. It is cowardly, mean, unjust . . . The fact of her sex should make her exempt from all that is coarse, unkind or cruel. No genuine man ever yet abused a woman. As soon expect to see a bar of lightning in the blue sky of June, a rose in the snow-bank of January, a gift from a miser, a great act from a mean soul, as a real man abusing a woman. (1870)

We understand that a young man of this village, has been circulating a petition to get himself appointed telegraph operator, in the place of Miss Holister, the present obliging and lady-like operator. The petition should receive the contempt it so richly merits. When an able-bodied young man gets so avaricious of gathering to himself the means of livelihood of others and carries it so far as to covet the bread of the weaker sex, he has reached that point where a blush would fail to mantle his cheek. (1870)

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THE SPY.

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Mr. Gossip.

Some girls there are, for lack of breeding,
Are very apt to laugh in meeting,
Which causes people to observe,
How far from decency they swerve.

The ladies who indulged themselves in laughing at church, on sabbath last, are advised to suppress their risible faculties by considering that solemnity better becomes the countenance of a female after entering the sanctuary, than the most enticing smiles. Flattering myself that they will not again engage in so improper an act, I dismiss the subject. B.

Mr. Gossip,

Some men there are, for lack of breeding,
Are very apt to gaze about in meeting,
Which causes people to observe,
How far from decency they swerve.

Your correspondent "B" who seems to have been so much scandalized 'on Sabbath last' by a few harmless smiles, is informed that the best remedy for the evil is to keep his owl-like scarecrow countenance from Church. Or if he happen to have more piety than decency, and consequently a disposition to attend Church, we advise the scurvy fellow to mind his own business and not be glaring about with his two peeled onions as though he never saw decent company before in his life. We would advise, not merely this fellow, but a great many young men, not to be always staring at us with eyes, nostrils, and mouth distended and ears erect, like a silly horse that is about taking fright at some object. We do not go to Church to be spectacles for such boorish unmannerly boors; and if we happen to smile now and then, we are forced to do so, by the ridiculous appearance which these silly fellows make.

The Ladies who laughed, &c.

Oh, ye Grocers and Sellers of LIQUORS!--why will ye longer turn a listening ear to the calls of my Husband? Why will ye continue to deal out that cursed beverage which not only ruins my Husband, but has a direct tendency to impoverish his family? Oh, pause for a moment, and reflect, that a continuation of your adherence to his calls, will ere long oblige myself and little ones to feast our hungry appetites on a cup of cold water and a crust of dry bread.

Be men and not monsters.

A WIFE.

Mr. Gossip.

Of all the evils practiced among men, that of lurking about the windows of their neighbours while darkness prevails for the purpose of listening to the tales related within, or watching the various vocations of those who should neglect to draw their curtains, is one which most richly deserves your notice and bitter reproach. There can scarcely be a more foul charge invented against us, than that we have been guilty of thus violating good manners.

THE LADIES.

Mr. Gossip—

The young gentlemen of our village who are in the habitual practice of parading themselves a few feet from the Church door as soon as the exercise is closed, for the purpose of gazing either direct and impertinent, or oblique and shamefully at the Ladies as they pass, would appear much better and far more respectable, if they could be seen making their way homeward. D.

Mr. Editor.

However improbable the following circumstances appear, yet they may be relied on as facts. That in the nineteenth century, in the days of civilization and refinement, such deeds of superstition and barbarity should take place, is truly to be deplored; and can only be accounted for by the grossest ignorance and mental blindness.

A few days since, one Moses Gleason, an itinerant Methodist preacher, located for the present at Enfield, came into possession of a brood of young Ducks. From some unaccountable reason or other, these Ducklings had not been long his own before he firmly believed they were, as he called it, bewitched. and in the excitement and indignation of the moment, he came to the resolution of discovering the "witch," for the purpose of consigning her to punishment. He commenced his process by heating his stove to a red heat, and while it was in that condition consigned his little brood to the inside of it, where, as a matter of course, they were speedily consumed, and thus miserably perished. Whether Mr. Gleason supposed that by these incantations he could force the witch to reveal herself, or in what manner they were to conduce to the discovery, is not known; but he confesses that he has failed in his experiment, and is about repeating a more potent and effectual charm. By this statement of facts no reflection is intended upon any of the Methodist persuasion, for there is no doubt that whatever denomination of Christians Mr. Gleason might belong to, he would, with such ignorance and credulity of mind, perform the same operation.

Having given you the above instance of savage frenzy, permit me to give you another of legal oppression, which occurred in the same neighbourhood some few weeks since. A married woman by the name of Burd, and whose husband has been absent for the last four months—was brought before Rolfe and Wood, justices of the town, on complaint being lodged against her as a pauper. While before these gentlemen, who it is trusted are only dressed in a little brief authority, she was compelled by threats and otherwise, to swear to her situation—whether in a state of pregnancy or not. Having done so, and testified on the Evangelists, in the negative, and having been for some time an object of sport and obscenity, she was dismissed by these worthy magistrates, with the remark that either of them would qualify her for a Magdalen in the absence of her husband. Comment on such brutal outrage is unnecessary.

I.

A man without a woman is like a ship without
a sail,
Is like a boat without a rudder, is like a kite
without a tail.
A man without a woman is like a wreck upon
the sand,
But if there's one thing worse in this universe
It's a woman, I said a woman, I mean a woman
without a man. (Cornell song, late 1800s)

* * *

Cannot some means be devised to squelch a party
of young men, who make themselves disgustingly
prominent by bathing in a public place like
Fall Creek Gorge. Ladies passing through the
gorge at any time are liable to encounter these
specimens of humanity (in form) some of whom
take particular pains to show themselves. (1870)

There are several places on State St. that have
become chronic loafing places and the gangs of
men and boys that stand around and make
comments upon the ladies passing along are a
most unmitigated nuisance. (1889)

A woman goes into a store, for instance, a group
of gentlemen (?) sit around spitting tobacco juice
on the stove in order to perfume the atmosphere;
as she passes along to the counter about her
business, she sees various nods, winks, and leers
pass from one to the other, hears whispers,
and at last, her ears are delighted by a broad
guffaw of laughter from the entire group, leaving
her to infer that the whispers were some spicy
and graceful remarks about herself. There are
stores and groceries to which no woman can go
without being greeted in this manner. (1874)

A class of young men . . . are always to be found
at places of fashionable resort, and, I must add,
are sometimes, like summer flies, extremely
troublesome. . . . Some of these fellows, who
generally carry all the wit they have on their
backs, are almost intolerable in their conceits.
Their vanity is excessive. They seem to think
they have only to make a show towards a lady,
in order to gain access to her affections; and an
over-strained, far-fetched compliment, they
imagine, ought to throw her into an ecstasy
of delight. (1828)

Contrary to the Role

[Ithaca lady oarists visiting out of town] were
dressed in their rowing suits and created quite a
sensation among young men, particularly as
they were unaccompanied by a male escort. They
were muscular enough for self-protection. (1870)

A young man who was a stranger in the city,
commenced a flirtation with a girl in the park the
other evening, and thought he was making fair
progress toward an acquaintance, when the
young lady suddenly startled him by drawing a
pistol from her pocket. He did not know what he
had done to make himself a target for cold lead,
but was contemplating a retreat, when she pulled
the trigger and a fan spread out from the muzzle
of the weapon. The young man felt relieved, but
says that after this, he will keep posted on the
latest style of that kind of toy. (1875)

We would inform a certain cursing and searing
cooper, or barrel maker, living in our village,
that it [should] be [a] policy for him, when he

is in the act of threatening his wife, also when he
is talking about using his big knife in a manner
forbidden in scripture and by our laws, and
further, when he is taking the name of his God
in vain, cursing his own flesh by imprecating that
rib which was taken from Adam, that it might
seem good policy for him to remember and
realise, when he is engaged in such atrocious
act[s] as alluded above, that for all these he must
give an account; and further we advise him to
recollect, that Ithaca furnishes rails for fence[s],
geese for feathers, and that in Barbadoes grows
a pine that is excellent for making a kind of
tar, which is summer is much used for making
waggon wheels run glib — A caution in time may
save a friend of ours. *Ten Girls* (1828)

Miss Elsa Blumen, the Queen of Lady Pedestrians,
is to walk 100 miles in 27 hours, commencing
at Wilgus Opera House [previously on State Street,
demolished in 1976] this Thursday evening. Fred J.
House, an amateur pedestrian of Ithaca, will attempt
to accomplish 127 miles at the same time and place.
This exhibition will probably draw a large crowd.

————— (later)

From eight o'clock on Thursday evening until
eleven Friday night, Miss Von Blumen and House
continued their monotonous walk, leaving the
track only about four hours during that time. . . .
Although Miss Von Blumen was suffering from a
severe cold, she showed little signs of weariness.
House began to break down Friday afternoon
and his feet were so sore that during the last half
day he was compelled to walk in his stocking
feet. . . . Soon after House left the track he
fainted away from fatigue. (1870)

There is a blind woman in Tompkins County
who splits wood, builds the fire and brings
water. (1875)

Men as a rule give the fair sex no credit for doing
any manual labor about the house, but there is
at least one man who has learned that in a case
of emergency, women are capable of doing their
share of lifting and hauling. One of the express
men with the Ithaca Transfer Company called
for a trunk at a house in the southern section
of the town last night, and was at a loss to obtain
help when he learned that the trunk was in the
second story, and too heavy and clumsy for one
to handle. Great was his surprise when a feminine
voice spoke up and said "Perhaps I can aid you."
The baggage hustler at first refused but the lady
of the house insisted and still greater was the
baggage man's astonishment when his fair helper
picked [up] "her" end of the trunk, did her
share in carrying the trunk down the stairs and
then out into the street. At this juncture the
pride of the "knight of the grip" would not allow
the woman to proceed further. The trunk was
left on the sidewalk and she went back into the
house, not once thinking she had accomplished
anything very wonderful. With the driver it was
different. He tugged away with the clothes chest
for some minutes and finally landed it in the
wagon. He drove away with a broad smile upon
his face; in his mind was a higher estimation of
woman than had ever before occurred to him and
today the chief topic among the baggage men
about the corner of State and Aurora streets is
the story of the fair, willing, and able helper.
(1900)

* * *

Trumansburg has a female lecturer, or lecturess, at their Opera Hall this evening, who is to tell what she knows about woman's rights, and what she don't know about man's domestic happiness, as she is a single lady. (1875)

Whatever opinion we may entertain as to the propriety of women occupying the lecture platform, the curiosity which we all inherit from our common Mother Eve, leads us to wish to see and hear what they have to say when they assume that position. (1867)

in the Cornell collection, which includes those of a number of doctors, professors, lawyers and naturalists. (1927)

A man wrote in defense of women's apparently lower intellectual achievements:

As a general principle it is not safe to say that considering the elaborate efforts made for a good many centuries to drive all the brains out of woman and keep her "in her proper sphere" and the very recent and partial efforts made to educate her, that the average of natural intellect



Great excitement was produced among the boys on Monday evening, by learning that Mrs. [Amelia] Bloomer was in town and would probably appear in public on Tuesday . . . All were anxious to see this celebrated woman; but when she made her appearance, taking an early walk on Tuesday morning, leaning on the arm of her husband, instead of seeing the Elephant as she passed up by our house as was expected, we saw a plain Female dressed not unlike many others . . . She is not handsome, (pardon us for saying so) and we saw nothing in her appearance that need excite the curiosity of anyone. (1853)

* * *

Mrs. Helen Gardner bequeathed her brain to the Cornell University Laboratory, in the hopes of proving woman's brain equal to man's:

Worldwide interest has been created by the recent publication of the findings of a study of the brain of Mrs. Helen H. Gardner, well-known author, lecturer, and feminist . . . In the structure of her own brain Mrs. Gardner has presented abundant evidence that the brain of a woman need not be inferior to that of a man of equal rank. In its entire organization it reveals a wealth of cortical substance or gray matter that is only equalled, but not exceeded by, the best brains

is as high among women as men . . . Whether men or women are as a class more intellectual cannot be told until a hundred or two years after all unequal distinctions between the sexes in education, business, politics, etc., have been removed. And that time of fair play hasn't come yet. (1870)

It all happened while Miss Olcott, driving a yellow-hued touring car, used by the campaigners in the state suffrage work, was on her way to State and Tioga streets to address an open-air meeting. In front of Rothchild Brothers' store, the machine came to a dead stop. It refused to budge an inch. Miss Olcott had three woman companions with her and together the quartet of suffragists tried all sorts of plans to make the engine proceed. Several men tried to help, but the engine acted like a stubborn senator. It was near eight o'clock and Miss Olcott, who was scheduled to speak at that hour, using the car as a feature of her address, became worried. She sent to a local garage for assistance but even its employes brought no action from the dilatory engine. Finally, Miss Olcott surmised that there might be something wrong with the carburetor. She fished a hair-pin from her hair and proceeded to clean out the carburetor. "Now crank the engine," she asked a companion. The crank was turned and the engine started. The hair-pin had won a decisive victory and the cause of suffrage had once more triumphed. (1914)

For Fun!

LUDLOWVILLE WITCH TRIAL – An Extrapolation

It is said that on a clear moonlit night, hundreds of otherwise normal citizens rose from their beds, somberly put on their hats and capes, reached for their ancient brooms, and then once outside, sailed up into the sky and flew off toward the heart of the moon. All else knew to stay inside those cool clear nights, when the witches of Tompkins



THE ERVAY QUADRUPLETS

On July 25, 1855, a time before an army of doctors and devices waited in anticipation of the blessed event, Linda Ervay of Conneticut Hill in Newfield gave birth to quadruplets. Mr. Ervay made the preparations for the birth. Gladys E. Morley of Elmira, one of their living grandchildren, tells us:

Grandfather [the husband] made a bed from lumber he got right there on the farm. It was



County were out riding the skies. The streets were empty, and the town slept.

Only one unfortunate woman was ever brought to trial for witchcraft, and that was back in 1814 in Ludlowville.¹ The witch-hunting era in America had ceased in the early 1700s, though belief in witchcraft persisted.² Nathan Crawford was a newcomer from a "hot bed of that belief in New England."³ His daughter, a consumptive, died of pneumonia. He accused an old Dutch woman of the neighborhood of bewitching his daughter and causing her death.

Crawford approached Judge Richard Townley, associate judge of the county, and demanded a warrant for her arrest. The Judge was unsympathetic, but the complainant insisted. The warrant was issued and a trial date appointed.

The big day arrived, and a peanut gallery of witches showed up at the Townley house to watch the fun. It was a delightful experience, they all agreed afterwards. Especially enjoyable was when a friend of his deceased daughter's revealed how she *really* got the pneumonia – a group of friends had been skating and the poor girl had fallen through the ice and gotten chilled.⁴ She never told her father.

With this testimony, Mr. Crawford's case was shot full of holes. He sat there, jaw set, staring straight ahead. All the witches in the room chortled with undisguised glee and filed out, victorious.

Witches had a free reign once again. Nevermore was the finger pointed at "likely suspects" because someone had unexpectedly died. And on a clear moonlit night, spell-binding spiritists still don hats and capes, soar the skies, and dance with the stars.

padding with cotton batting and sheepskin with the wool on it. They brought in fieldstones, scrubbed and heaved them on the hearth, using the hot stones to line the bed and provide extra heat. There were always other stones warming as replacements on the hearth, too. Grandmother [the mother] filled Mason jars with warm water and always had their replacements on the hearth, too.⁵

This last fact was so appreciated by the Mason Jar Company that when the tale was printed later, they sent the Ervay family three hundred brand new jars. With a grand total of thirteen children, they were probably put to good use.⁶

And the babies entered the world. First Ira (a girl), then Irvan, Iva, and lastly Ina. The heaviest was 1¼ pounds, the lightest was 1¼ pounds. Four at once! This was and is the only set of quadruplets ever born in Tompkins County.

A quadruplet birth could hardly go unnoticed. Soon the famous P. T. Barnum was knocking at their door, prepared to make an offer they couldn't refuse. Apparently the Ervays were not well off financially, and when P. T. made his offer – some say \$500, some say \$5,000 – to take the babies on tour with his circus for ten weeks, they agreed.

Historians differ as to whether two of the four babies died while on tour, or caught sick on tour and died after being brought home, or became sick and died only *after* being brought home. In any case, Iva died shortly after leaving Newfield, and Ina was not long in following. Both of the other two, however, lived to a ripe old age.

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- ★ In 1879, a seventy-eight-year-old woman in Ithaca completed a bedquilt containing 46,200 separate pieces.
 - ★ Both the first Caucasian to be born and to die in Tompkins County was a woman. (Sally Dumond was born on March 10, 1791; Rachel Allen, aged seventeen or eighteen, took ill and died while passing through Ithaca with her father.)
 - ★ The first marriage in Tompkins County (eighteen-year-old Mary Johnson to Abram Davenport in 1798) was probably consummated at Archer Green's house, then located on the north side of Cascadilla Creek toward Ithaca Falls.⁷