



AAPA MISCELLANY

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Christmas in July Issue

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HAPPY HOLIDAYS

I wanted to publish a holiday issue of *AAPA Miscellany* in December, but I did not have enough material. I have finally gathered material for an issue, less than half of which is Christmas related. But that's okay. If you, Dear Reader, do not mind having a little Yuletide during your Julytide, there is no problem. The writers have waited long enough to see their efforts in print or pixels. And good stories and writing, which always add zesty seasoning to our lives, are nonetheless seasonless.

The Christmas gifts I received late last year are from Delores and Russell Miller, Marey Barthoff, and David Griffin. In separate stories the Farmers Miller recall the child in us. Marey reminds us that the spirit of Christmas need not be limited to us two-legged animals. Dave Griffin shares a Christmas story from his *Monk in the Cellar*, a novel about "destitute monks in a decrepit old monastery."

Since the call for Christmas stories, I have gathered three others that deserve a reading. George Chapman is an antique car enthusiast. In his print shop/garage, as he told us in the May 2017 issue of the *AAJ*, is not only his press but also his 1931 Chevrolet that he is restoring. In his story here he traces his interest in old autos, especially one particular car. Meanwhile, on a trip to visit an old English department longtime colleague and friend, Carl Kremer and I saw a sign offering Yetis for sale, and we wondered how that would go if they meant more than well insulated mugs and coolers. We set ourselves the writing task to explore that idea.

Let me be among the first to wish you "Happy Holidays!"

Delores Miller	"On Jordan's Bank"—Christmas 1975	3
Russell Miller	Christmas Candy Bags	4
Marey Barthoff	Petunia	5
David Griffin	Listen	6
George Chapman	My Antique Car Odyssey and a Brush with Automotive History	8
Carl Kremer	A Shot at the American Dream	11
Clarence Wolfshohl	Bartleby the Yeti Analyzes His DNA	13

ON JORDAN'S BANK - CHRISTMAS 1975

By Delores Miller

It was Christmas time, 1975. Son Richard, 4 years old and the middle child, had started Sunday School that autumn, along with his big brother Keith and sister Robin. Marianne was only 3 years old, and Matthew a baby. Richard was the big middle child, trotting off to Sunday School. Christmas was coming and his teacher, the Pastor's daughter Julie Kaiser handed out the Christmas Eve Program Schedule. Richard's main segment was to learn the classic song: ON JORDAN'S BANK, THE BAPTIST'S CRY.

Over and over that whole month of December we heard him practicing and singing that song. Practice on Saturday at church. Come Christmas Eve Day, visitors came to the Miller House. Richard sprang up early that morning to view the tree and make Christmas. Come the evening service after milking the cows, Richard was dressed in his red suit jacket with the clip on bow tie that he had inherited from Keith. Oh, how excited he was to be finally able to sing "On Jordan's Bank."

Low and behold, as soon as he marched in the warm dark church and sat next to his teacher, he fell into a deep sleep. Julie kept pinching him and punching him to wake up and participate in the service. The Pastor kept eyeballing Russ to do something. Ended up doing nothing.

Service finally ended; still Richard slept on, and Julie not knowing what to do, dragged Richard down the aisle into the arms of an usher who held him until Russell could rescue his sleeping middle child. Stuffed him into his jacket, the nice little blue fuzzy one inherited also from Keith and out into the cold winter night. When the cold air woke Richard, he immediately demanded his 'candy bag.'

And that is why at Christmas we always tell the story of Richard's sleep through Christmas Eve service. Today, in 2016, Richard is 45 years old and an analyst with the New England Patriot Football team, and has young sons of his own.

On Jordan's bank, the Baptist's cry, Announces that the Lord is nigh,
Come then and listen for he brings good news about the King of Kings.

CHRISTMAS CANDY BAGS

By Russell Miller

The Miller family of central Wisconsin were poor dairy farmers. There was no denying that fact. But so was every one else in this farming neighborhood and community. So we were not aware how poor we were at least at Christmas time.

Brown paper bags of candy. The School Board and Teacher always had for each pupil a bag at the end of a successful Christmas Program in this rural Shady Grove one-room school with 25 students in eight grades.

These theatrical productions for the whole community included skits, plays, songs and the finale - the appearance of Santa Claus, usually a farmer with manure on his boots. And the brown paper bag of candy as a reward.

And a yearly trek to St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Big Falls, Wisconsin, for their Christmas Eve service, where all had a part in the program. Said a recitation piece in front of the altar, near the decorated tree with real candles. Sang hymns and carols, took part in the nativity play, where some children were Mary, Joseph, the Wise Men, and Shepherds. If a baby, recently born, was available, it was the baby Jesus. What good actors we thought we were! The finale was, of course, another brown paper bag of nuts, fruit, candy and peanuts.

The biggest brown paper bag of candy was the yearly gift from our parents. (Our only gift as they had eight children.) Nuts in the shells, pecans, filberts, almonds, walnuts, Brazil nuts. Had to be broken with a nut cracker or hammer, shells flying all over. Salted peanuts, sucked the shells for the salt. An apple and orange, one of the few times our parents could afford fruit.

And candy - that hard angel food candy, sweet meringue with a bitter chocolate covering. Chocolate stars.

Seventy-two years ago and only memories remain to tease the taste buds with thoughts of Christmas long ago. My wish for Christmas now in 2016 would be for Santa Claus to visit and leave me only a brown paper bag of candy, nuts, fruit and peanuts for me to enjoy. I suppose it would not taste the same.





Petunia

as most cheerily reported
by Marey Barthoff

Back in grade school, I lived right next door to tiny, grandmotherly Mrs. Ayers, & her giant St. Bernhard, Bo. Mrs. Ayers loved glazed donuts. And Bo.

Just once a year, Bo got a glazed donut of his own. Each Christmas morning, Mrs. Ayers would gift-wrap one glazed donut, red ribbon and all, and give it to Bo.

Mrs. Ayers would make a secret wish. And then she'd help Bo open his present. And Bo got his special breakfast. Every year, he'd

take his donut out back to his big, white doghouse to munch.

The Christmas morning I turned 11, Bo got his usual donut. Just as he was in his kitchen unwrapping it, we saw a tiny, extra-fluffy, orange kitten wander next door, right into Bo's backyard, & right into his doghouse.... and settle in for her first catnap of the day.

A minute later, we heard a big MEOW!, ran over, & there was a very startled-looking Bo, standing in his doghouse doorway, pushing his Christmas donut toward a new friend. They sat and shared it together in the doghouse.

Just then, Mrs. Ayers quietly tiptoed out there, and just stood a minute, eyes all misty. She whispered, "Oh Bo, how did you know I had wished for a kitten for Christmas?"

Listen

A Christmas Symbol You Can't Buy

By David Griffin

A Christmas story from Monk In The Cellar, the novel about eleven destitute monks in a decrepit old monastery in New York State. Through a strange set of circumstances, Brother Jesse finds his way to the Internet and writes a tell-all blog.

It's after compline now and I've come down here to the cellar as I like to do late at night. Just to be with my thoughts. I spent the afternoon working with Brother Winifred, who we call Kickstart. We all have nicknames for each other, and his comes from his motorcycle days.

I feel badly for Kick. He is unsure of his vocation, writhing in an agony of indecision. I'm not sure he has a true calling to this life. He may have only an attraction to its different-ness. I can't tell him whether he is called to it. He either is or he isn't. If I could give Kickstart the answers he seeks, I would surely do so. But it turns out we can never give people what they truly need. We can only listen to them. Sometimes we can help them hear what lies deep inside them.

On my first Christmas away from home after joining the Ardent Brothers as a young man, I was assigned to a Retreat House in New Jersey and was serving on a 4-day Retreat for retired nuns ... 40 of them! When my little travel alarm went off at 5:00 on Christmas morning, I woke up in my cell-like room in the dark.

I thought back to all the times as a boy I had come awake on this day, sure that a surprise gift or two waited for me under a glorious tree festooned with colored lights. There would be no tree or gift this morning and I felt lonely and rather sad, even at age 24. I switched on the lamp and beneath it on the bedside table sat a small box wrapped in Christmas paper. Opening it, I discovered a pine cone, round and open with square woody sprigs sprouting out. The touches of pine sap had dried to a white frosting, making it very Christmas-like. It was beautiful. It was wonderful. I've kept it for years.

The pine cone is an ancient symbol of enlightenment and no doubt one of the nuns believed I was in need of a good measure of it. I laughed to myself. She was probably right.

A half hour later I stood next to an old priest on the altar as he said Mass and I functioned as the altar server. I looked out at the forty women in their religious habits and saw one who might have been the oldest smiling at me. She was beaming and her hand gave me a little wave.

Later at breakfast, I spoke to her. "Thank you so much for the pine cone. Why did you do that for me?"

"You're the youngest here," she said. "You would miss Christmas presents the most."

I was embarrassed. "I guess I'll get over it someday," I said.

"Oh, you needn't rush," she said. "Embrace that longing you have for a gift from under the Christmas tree. Feel it and let it remind you that something deeper in you is longing for Him."

"Longing for a Christmas present and longing for God are not the same," I said.

"Are you sure?" She laughed. "Don't be so holy. Let your desires show you what your soul already knows to be true."

"I'm not sure I know what I want," I said.

"You will know when you listen," she said.

When I listened, I found strength to live by, and coincidentally the meaning of Christmas. It is Emmanuel, the name that means He is with us. There is someone who walks the path by our side throughout our lives, who shows himself at the oddest times through a variety of people. It turns out our salvation is worked out among our friends and neighbors. And all we need to do is what that little sign tells us ... the one we often see at this time of year hanging in a store, a bar, an office, a dorm room or a home. It explains everything in one word, "Believe." It's all we need if we want to see miracles happen all around us.

You know, I can't give Kickstart his faith. But I can give him a symbol and pray that he listens. I can give him my pine cone.

Listen and you will hear what's inside you. Believe and He will be with you.

Emmanuel. Merry Christmas!

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David M. Griffin, Sr.

(1943-2017)

Dave always graciously shared his writing with others. When I contacted him in the fall of 2016 for material for this issue, he gave me free access to his stories online, suggesting "Listen" as a Christmas story. His help in not only gathering manuscripts but in getting *AAPA Miscellany* underway was valuable. The AAPA lost a sterling member with Dave's parting.

My Antique Car Odyssey and a Brush with Automotive History

By George Chapman

My interest in antique cars goes back a long way. My earliest memory is from the very late 1930s. Visiting a family friend who was vacationing in a southern New Hampshire town, I remember we played in the barn on the property, climbing over and on a very old car. In my memory it was brass era but all I can say for sure is that it was an open car with tufted leather seats and definitely old. I suppose it could have even been “just” a model T Ford.

Jump ahead just a few years and a family outing took me to the Museum of Antique Autos in Princeton, Massachusetts, to further heighten my interest. For those unfamiliar with that museum, it was started by Albert Garganigo in the 1930s to house his collection of horseless carriages. I believe that they were all 1910 or earlier. The museum closed in 1963 and ten years later the contents were auctioned.

Around 1945 a school friend and I started cataloging the “old cars” we saw. If either of us saw one parked on the street we would check it out and write down the make. In those early post World War II days, there was no shortage of older cars still being driven. Unfortunately, a lot of the really old cars that were sitting in scrap yards circa 1940 had gone to the war effort. My friend’s family had owned one of these local yards and I remember seeing a line-up of old cars disappear during the war years.

Living in town, the acquisition of a car at an early age was not high on my priority list and even if it had been, I doubt that my parents would have endorsed the idea. I do recall several high school classmates who were driving some very nice 1930s cars that they had resurrected.

Four years of college, two in the Army, and I was finally back in civilian life with a job. Was it time to think about antique cars again? Well, you know marriage and children sort of set that idea back—but not for long. In the summer of 1962 with a six month old son and another on the way, I threw caution to the winds and started shopping for some kind of antique vehicle. A visit to a car show sponsored by a local bank had my mind skewed towards a Model A Ford. That even led me to Fred Page’s Model A Garage in Pike, New Hampshire, where I saw not only Fords but a number of other tantalizing cars.

In the meantime, I had seen a 1932 Ford Station Wagon, a four-cylinder Model B, being sold by Bud Kornhoff, an antique car mechanic of some renown, who lived in a nearby town in northern New Jersey. What to do? I called Fred Page, who worked in New York City as a vice president of American Express during the week, commuting to New Hampshire on the weekends. Fred said if it were him, he would buy the Model B. So I did!

A few months later, our second son was born and my wife and I decided that we needed more room than the one bedroom garden apartment where we were liv-

ing provided. I don't remember how the contact was made, but one evening I came home from work and my wife described the first floor of a neat old Victorian that was available for rent at a reasonable cost. It was just a couple of towns away in Rutherford, New Jersey, and the owner would decorate it to our desire—meaning we got to pick the wallpaper! It even had a garage in which I could work on the Model B which was stored in a garage down the street from our apartment.

And here is our brush with automotive history: the house had been the home of a true automotive pioneer, Gilbert J. Loomis, for the past thirty or more years. Loomis had died in October of 1961 at the age of 90, and his son Donald was renting it out.

The January-February 1962 *Bulb Horn* carried a page and a third obituary for Loomis. I suspect it was written by Donald but there is no attribution in the magazine. Gilbert Loomis was born about 1871 in Westfield, Massachusetts. Westfield is sometimes called the “whip city” because of its history as one of the major 19th century manufacturing centers for buggy whips. Somewhat ironic considering the general area was a hot bed of early automobile development.

On graduation, Loomis ventured east across the Connecticut River to Chicopee Falls to accept employment with the Overman Wheel Company, manufacturers of the popular Victor bicycle. In 1896, he returned to Westfield and opened a bicycle shop which also provided space for his first work on developing an automobile. He likely was inspired by the work of the Duryea Brothers in nearby Springfield, Massachusetts, where they have been credited with the first public operation of a motor vehicle in 1893.

For the next seven years Loomis built automobiles, which after a short try at steam were powered by two cylinder internal combustion engines. A 1901 *Horseless Age* advertisement was for a light weight (520 pounds) five horsepower “Park Wagon.” The ad invited readers to contact the company for a catalog showing Models 2 and 3.

In an attempt to raise capital to expand the business he approached Andrew Carnegie who dismissed him with the statement: “I would not ride in one of those things, they are too dangerous and there ought to be a law against manufacturing any that would go faster than twenty miles an hour.”

In developing his vehicles, Loomis invented a float carburetor, parts of which were lying on his basement workbench in New Jersey when I rented the house in 1963. He also obtained and/or applied for patents on a muffler, radiator cooling fans, and a chassis design.

Unable to obtain financing he sold the business and went to work for Pope Manufacturing, which was based in Hartford, Connecticut, but apparently had manufacturing facilities in Westfield. He continued to work for Pope in Hagerstown, Maryland, where the Pope-Tribune was being manufactured.

From there he went to Erie, Pennsylvania, to work on the Payne Modern for the Modern Tool Company. The obituary states that Loomis developed the V type four-

1908 and Loomis moved on to Dayton, Ohio, to be the chief designer for the Speedwell Automobile Company.

That Loomis had some earlier connection to Dayton is evidenced by the fact that Ohio History Central claims that the first ever automobile insurance policy was purchased in Dayton by Gilbert Loomis in 1897. The liability policy from the Travelers Insurance Company was for \$1,000.00 and protected him if his car killed or injured someone or damaged their property.

While in Dayton, he became friends with Wilbur and Orville Wright and arranged for them to have space in the Speedwell plant. He and friends tried to buy a plane from the Wrights and show it around the country. However, terms of the contract presented by the Wrights were considered onerous by the group and they dropped the idea.

According to the obituary, Speedwell continued to employ Loomis until 1912 when he moved on to New York and represented the Firestone Tire and Rubber Company there. He later opened a branch of the E. A. Wright Banknote Co., a Philadelphia company, for whom he worked until his retirement in 1948. Assuming that the obituary was prepared by Donald Loomis, I must assume the information is accurate. I have been unable to run down any significant information about E. A. Wright Banknote Co., although samples of their work can be found on the internet.

Donald Loomis was a considerate and friendly landlord. After we moved out two years later, to buy a home on Long Island, he decided that he really didn't like being a landlord and sold the house. Sometime in the 80s or 90s, it was destroyed by a fire and has been replaced by a "modern" Victorian.

During our tenancy, he gave me a collection of license plates that his father had collected. They dated back to the late teens and included plates from New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, and Alaska. After hauling them around for thirty-five years, I disposed of them on eBay. The two Alaska plates from the mid-1930s (and I have no idea how or why Loomis had them) sold for almost \$1000.00. The balance of them sold at various prices up to \$50.00. I calculate I retrieved about half the rent I paid!

As an indication of Gil Loomis' approach to life, the house in Rutherford was divided into second and first floor apartments. The basement was walled off and each section included an identical oil burning boiler for hot water heating and each had its own oil tank. In our section there was a small notebook hanging on the tank in which were noted every oil purchase for more than thirty years. In one year, when the amount of oil purchased was excessively high, Loomis had noted "upstairs vacant". In normal times with an upstairs tenant, the first floor apartment occupied by Loomis would have benefited greatly from the heat of the riser pipes for the second floor heat.

I purchased from Donald Loomis his father's BOG socket set. Research shows that the early model ratchet is probably from the late 1920s. I have used that set extensively for fifty years now, so every time I work on my car, there is a little automotive pioneer DNA included!

Side Bar One

The 1932 Ford mentioned in this article was sold, as a basket case, in 2000. At the same time another collectible, a 1955 Willys Station Wagon was also sold so that I could focus my attention on a 1931 Chevrolet Sport Coupe that has been in the family since the mid-1960s. With a little luck, it will be on the road this summer.

I was asked by the VMCCA Publications vice-president to take on the classifieds about 15 years ago and have been doing so ever since, through three address changes! Other antique vehicle activities include being treasurer of the Red Flag Motor Tour, a locally operated annual tour for brass era vehicles and others up through 1927.

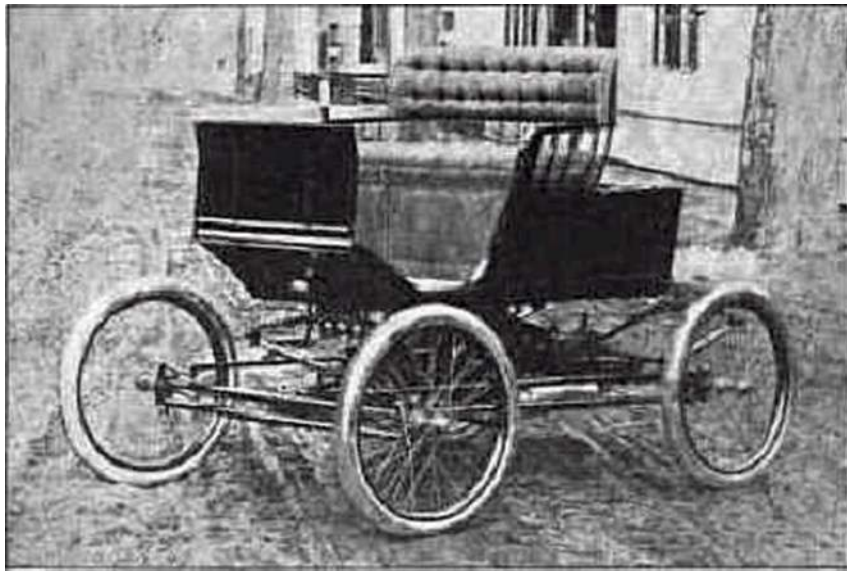
Side Bar Two

Have you ever seen a Loomis? Donald Loomis wrote the author in 1965 and said he knew of three. One was somewhere in the Pioneer Valley and had been restored by someone named Bradford, another in the Henry Ford Museum, and another in Oshawa, Ontario. That was 50 years ago—where are those cars now and are there any more?

I would appreciate hearing from anyone with knowledge of the existence of any Loomis vehicles.

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1901 Loomis Runabout
Loomis Auto Car Company
Westfield, MA 1901-1904

A Shot at the American Dream

By Carl Kremer



BY VERY CLEVER MARKETING, slick designs and excellent quality, Yeti products—beginning with insulated drinking cups and ice-chests and moving into other outdoor gear—have positioned themselves as the gold standard of the industry. The evil truth behind their manufacture, however, is nothing short of vile. The name, “Yeti,” is fiendishly appropriate, re-mindful of the Himalaya Mountains and Mount Everest, the highest, mightiest and coldest mountain on earth and home of the

mysterious, elusive Yeti people, perhaps the most primitive and neglected of our race. Our government, ever vigilant in the pursuit of profit made an intensive study of the Yeti, using satellite imagery, drones, helicopters and eventually fielding a team of corporate-backed, well-paid professionals in the fields of science and linguistic analysis, with two local Sherpa guides, under the highest level of top-secret security eventually contacted a small tribe in the deepest reaches of the Himalayas. Mindful of the dire consequences of such contact with previously untouched ethnic groups—introduction of diseases and modern 'conveniences' which swiftly and irrevocably altered these ancient cultures, they brought no weapons, and all other modern equipment was carefully concealed in their initial contacts—with the exception of a simple agricultural tool, fashioned to resemble a simple stick: electric cattle prods, in case the Yeti proved aggressive. They were known to have only simple cudgels, stone axes and other primitive hunting weapons—and wooden spears, curiously tipped with bladed metal points.

Within days of initial contact, they were able to communicate their peaceful intentions and comprehend the rudiments of their curious language, which at first seemed primarily guttural grunts, coughs, squeaks and what sounded like hiccups, with many quick, gestures of nods, pointing, a variety of head-bobbing moves, postures and shrugs. The team was never able to penetrate their social structure, as they met only pairs, who appeared in various places, but it was weeks before they were invited to the small village, a well concealed group of caves on the side of a rather inconspicuous mountain, reached by a long, dangerous, steep path with well-hidden hand and footholds. They were unable to ascertain the number of residents as they were not permitted beyond a fairly large room a short way into the mountain, with at least three portals that led deeper into what must have given access to other chambers.

When they offered dried jerky to their host, it was graciously accepted, sniffed, and then disappeared when a boy was summoned from another room, given the jerky and waved away, back into the bowels of the mountain. He reappeared a few minutes later with bowls of water, followed by a young female bearing a steaming pot of what looked

and smelled like stew, with small pieces of unidentifiable meat and vegetative matter. The bowls and pot were of metal, shaped and smoothed, and the pot was cool, though vapor wafted from the contents. Following the actions of their host, they drank the water, and the girl, using a large metal cup, filled their bowls with the stew, set down the pot and disappeared.

They sat in silence as their host squatted on the floor, folded his arms and bent his head, and for about 15 minutes did not move as they waited in silence. When he raised his head, he looked intently at each of them for several seconds, then picked up his bowl and slurped the broth loudly, smacking his lips and humming with evident gustatory pleasure. When he had drunk most of the broth, he picked the small chunks of meat from the bowl and ate them with his fingers. The Americans followed his example and nodded to one another at the succulence of their simple meal.

One of the team picked up his bowl and gestured to his host, stroking the bowl, and smiling in what he hoped was obvious pleasure. The Yeti never smiled, though some of their expressive grimaces revealed large, strong-looking teeth, with prominent canines. He watched the man admiring the bowl for some time, then shrugged, reached across to his guest, took the bowl, then handed it back, and folded his arms, which the group took to mean he was making a gift of it. They slept that night in the same room, were given more stew in the morning, and led back down the treacherous path to familiar ground, and their guide disappeared.

A few months later, a larger team made contact. Now, having analyzed and studied their language, secretly recorded by the earlier team, the team was able to make the Yeti understand they wanted more of the bowls and other metal Yeti implements. The Yeti gave them to understand they would trade many of their implements in exchange for one of the Americans, who would be adopted into the clan. There were no volunteers, but they left with several gifts, promising to return. When they did, several months later, they brought a stranger, a federal prisoner serving a life term who had agreed to join the clan rather than serve out his life incarcerated. The man was not with the clan when they returned, and it was determined he had been eaten by the Yeti, for whom human flesh was a highly prized delicacy.

In less than a year, they had established trade relations with the Yeti, trading prisoners, and eventually greater numbers of them, while the Yeti, seemingly addicted to them, were taught to produce bowls, cups, large chests and other products of their seemingly endless supply of the strange alloy they had developed, and which modern metallurgists were never quite able to duplicate.

So a great corporation makes great profits as the Yeti, deep in the Himalayas have grown fatter, and taken to wearing modern dress. Several of the children have been offered scholarships, once they become civilized.

Bartleby the Yeti Analyzes His DNA

By Clarence Wolfshohl

Bartleby stumbled back a step, a sheet of paper fluttering to the floor as his hand groped behind him for something solid to grasp. When it slammed palm down on the table with a jerk, Gertrude looked up from her coffee.

“What’s wrong, Bart?” She rose, stepped around the table, and reached out to him when she saw the paper on the floor. By reflex, she stooped and picked it up.

“I can’t believe it. How could that be?” Bartleby was addressing the air in front of him. He did not even notice Gertrude’s presence.

“What is it? Can’t believe what?”

He did not answer Gertrude, but he began to straighten himself and scan the floor for the sheet he had dropped. After a moment he noticed it in her hand.

“There. In that letter. Look at the chart.” Gertrude looked down to read. It was from Ancestry DNA and had a pie chart of several colors. As she began to apprehend the contents of the chart, her eyebrows crawled up her head and a twisted smile parted her lips.

Bartleby was a Yeti. He had been born and spent his childhood in Iceville, a small Yeti village in Nepal high in the Himalayans. He had apprenticed with a friend of the family to learn metalsmithing, after which he had gotten the kind of job every young Yeti wanted in the village. He started making the outer coverings of thermos cups. After several years, he met Gertrude at a company dance. She came from a village up the mountain and had started in the insulated lining department just a few weeks earlier. He thought she was pretty and not as pushy as most uphill girls. They dated regularly for the next year. Then he took her to her village and asked her father for her hand in marriage. With two more daughters still at home and the local village economy declining, Gertrude’s father was glad to consent. The two young Yetis were married the next June.

Bartleby and Gertrude had been married ten years when the world started intruding. After marrying, they had saved and bought a house and had two children, Bart, Jr., and little baby Myrtle, but they had done nothing to make that world intrude except do their jobs very well, as all good Yetis tried to do. But that is what caused the rest of the world to take notice; Yetis made damn good thermos cups. And the Yetis in Iceville heard that their fellow Yetis in other remote villages made good ice chests and other camping gear. By nature, Yetis are shy. They had very little interaction with the rest of the world outside Yeti Nation.

In fact, until recently, the outside world was considered a myth, a story parents told their children to keep them from straying. Oh, there had been a few grainy films that claimed to be proof that Humans existed. And in the capital in Yetiopolis was a museum with preserved footprints in ice blocks that were much smaller than the average Yeti’s foot, but professional debunkers had counter proof that the tracks

were manufactured. So creatures from beyond the mountains were scary monsters from folklore and children's bedtime stories that only a few adult Yetis even gave a second thought.

But then a chance encounter on the trails up Mt. Yetirest changed the Yetis' world. A family that had been picnicking forgot their ice chest, and when they sent the oldest son back to retrieve it, he ran into a little yetioid creature who had found the chest and was hauling it up the trail. At first the son was frightened, his head full of all the stories of such creatures who tended to infest parts of the world and commit violence on themselves and others. But he realized he was nearly twice as large as this tiny yetioid and there was only this one. He wanted to keep it as a pet, but he didn't think his snow leopard would tolerate this thing in its cage. So he picked it up and took it to his father. His father was a smart Yeti; indeed, he was manager of the ice chest division, authorized to negotiate deals with retailers throughout Yeti Nation.

The little creature, who after some months learned how to communicate with his masters, uh captors, uh future business partners, was himself authorized to negotiate with wholesalers and/or manufacturers because he ran an import-export business. The rest, we might say, is a globalized commerce dream story, for once the little creature, who told his Yeti family that he was a "Human," not a mythic creature at all, was allowed to return to Human Nation with sample Yeti handicrafts, the rest of the world flooded in on Yetis.

As all such encounters, although the Yetis did not know it but the humans had experienced so often, the resulting upheaval changed lives forever. A whole new world of experiences, ideas, and possibilities blessed the Yetis. A whole new world of experiences, ideas, and possibilities cursed the Yetis. Perhaps these were the same, perhaps not.

Yetis began to travel from their Himalayan homeland, to India, to Japan, to Europe, and to the United States. At first, Yetis were thrilled about the leader of the United States. They thought he looked like a Yeti. But after a while, they recognized he was way too small, especially his hands, and that hair was more orange than Yeti beige. And he said things no self-respecting, intelligent Yeti would say.

Bartleby liked one thing about the Human Nation. The Internet. He liked the action pictures he saw on something called YouTube, and one night he discovered YouTube videos about a creature called Bigfoot. He thought they were like the grainy films in the Yeti capital museum. Although some Yetis had believed all along that the films were real, many, including Bartleby, had considered them hoaxes, attempts by satirists to make some insulting point about Yeti life. But the believers were proved correct when Yeti Nation and Human Nation recognized each other with a formal treaty and trade agreement.

So how was Bartleby to understand these videos of Sasquatch, Bigfoot? He was irritated when he heard humans talk on their YouTubes about Yetis and Sasquatches being the same. Even if there were such a creature as Bigfoot, any fool could see that Yetis were much more evolved and refined. But Humans had thought of Yetis as bestial if not mythical only a few years earlier. Bartleby found among YouTube videos some supposedly of Yetis from before the great encounter. The films were grainy and the shadowy figures that the Human narrators claimed were Yetis looked more like the

orange-haired leader of the United States than any Yeti Bartleby knew. In fact, they looked like the films of Humans in the Yeti capital. Maybe the Humans took the film of Yetis who were taking films of them. Bartleby laughed at that thought. All he knew for certain was that Yetis were certainly not Sasquatches, nor Human.

One night during one of the new Yeti-Human sit-coms he enjoyed so much, Bartleby saw a commercial for Ancestry.com. He had done a thorough genealogical study of his family to hand down to Bart, Jr., but could trace back only ten generations. All rather commonplace Yetis. Tradesmen and factory workers, a few craftspeople and one artist, the black Yeti of the family. But the ad for DNA testing got his attention as if Fate were intervening in his humdrum routine life. The next day he ordered the kit and the following week sent off his DNA sample.

The results of the analysis were in Gertrude's hand. The results were in her cocked eyebrows. The results were in the twisted smile that grew larger and larger, until Gerty laughed out loud. She guffawed. She ejected snot from her nostrils and spittle from her mouth. She turned red, almost purple. She slapped the table once, twice, then pounded on it.

Bartleby had been attracted to Gertrude not only by her bright blue eyes and silky pelt. He had appreciated that she was not pushy or uppity like most uphill women. Also, she had a great sense of humor. But her laughter now was disconcerting, even irritating. Why would she laugh at this news? It may not affect her, but what about Jr. and Myrtle?

Bartleby took the paper with the colorful pie chart from Gertrude's hand, looked down, and sighed. What's so funny about being 26% Sasquatch?

