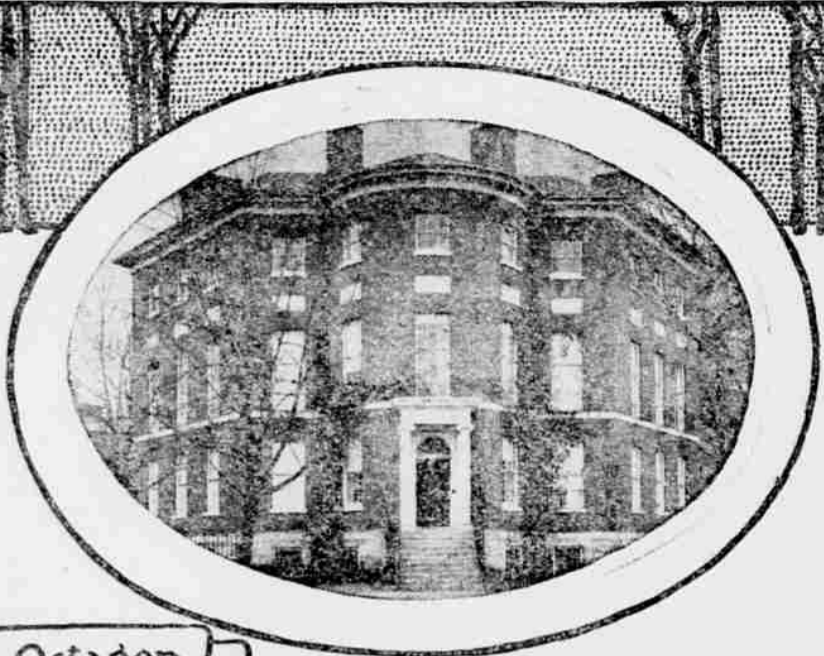
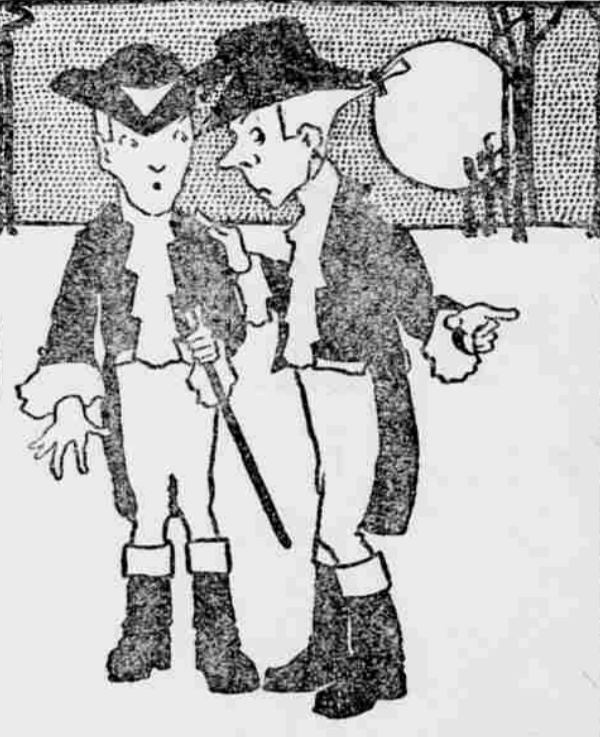


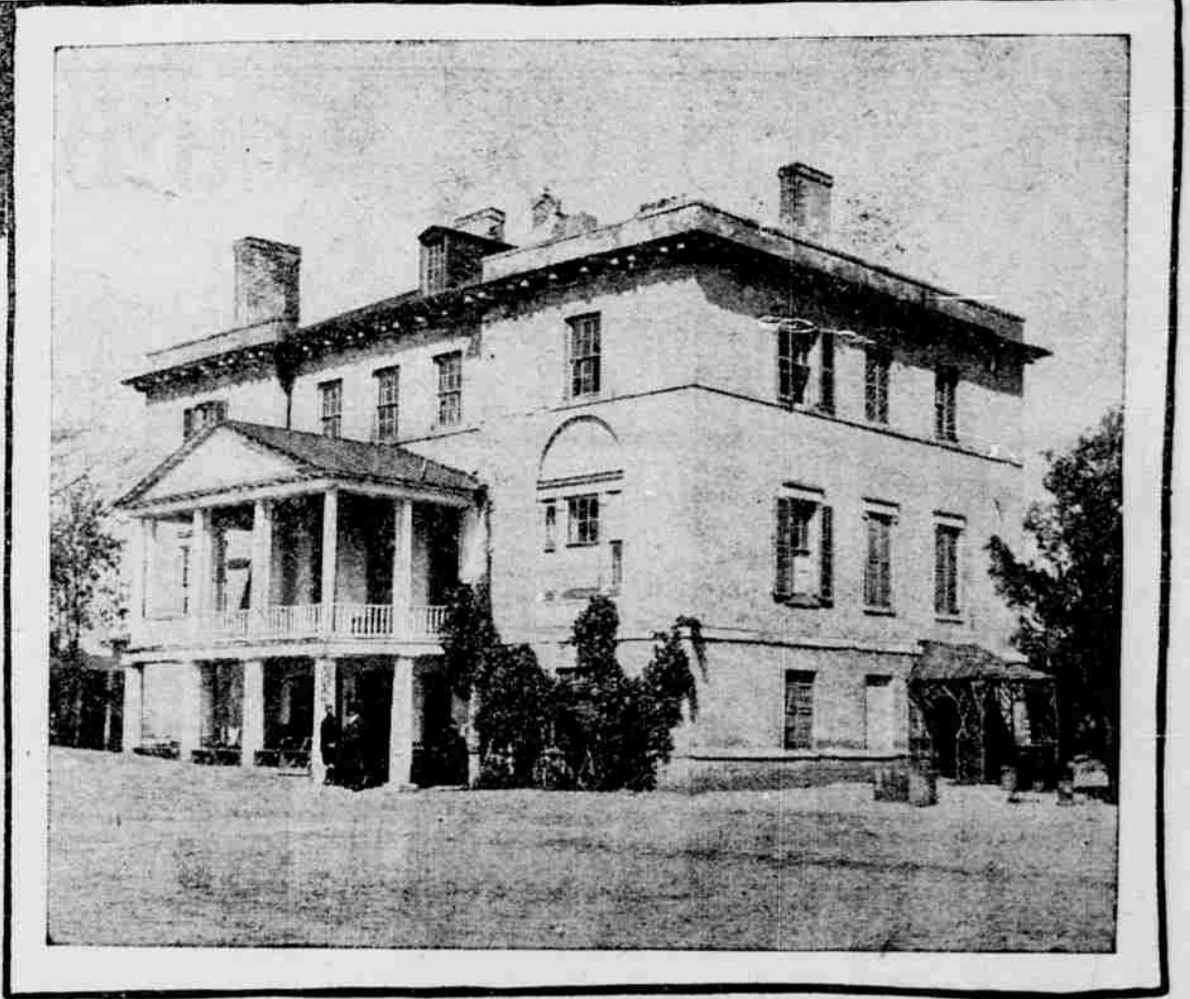
HAUNTED HOUSES OF WASHINGTON AND THEIR REWARD STORIES



The Octagon House



The Van Ness Mansion



Historic Homes of the Capital That Are Inhabited by Spirits--Tales of Ghostly Forms That Hover Near the Scene of Some Tragedy of Bygone Days--Occupant of Van Ness Mansion Saw a Small Woman, in Old-Fashioned Bonnet, Running Through the Hall, Calling, Frantically, "Steve! Steve!"--Headless Horses Seen in the Grounds

By L. A. WILSON.

EXCEPTING some extreme materialists, there is no one being who will absolutely deny the possibility or even the probability of the existence of beings in a state not ordinarily perceptible to human senses...

There is, perhaps, no other subject of discussion received with such absolute belief in the general and such entire skepticism in the particular. Yet for this very reason, possibly, there is no class of folklore which attracts greater attention than "ghost" stories.

by, memoirs of revelry and joy, or the darker imprint of cruelty and crime. Of these, one of the best known is the octagon house, on the corner of Eighteenth Street and New York Avenue...

The site of a house on I Street, just off Connecticut Avenue, has been one of the reputed haunted places of Washington. It was built on a century ago by a tailor, who had married a very beautiful girl, of whom he was jealous...

The last and by far the most interesting of Washington's haunted houses is the Van Ness mansion. Connected with the very earliest history of the city, a mansion whose rotting splendor fills one with a strange sense of loneliness...

The story of a house south of the Capitol and facing it, with its murder from jealousy in the cellar, and the figure of a woman in black, who enters from the street and goes upstairs, disappearing in an upper room, was given in detail in The Times about a year ago.

The house in which Mr. Seward and his son were attacked on the night of President Lincoln's assassination bore a reputation for being unlucky. Mr. Seward's daughter died from the shock of the attack upon her father and brother...

home in it was the Blaine family. There died Mr. Blaine himself, his son, and his daughter. The Lafayette Theatre now occupies the site.

On the anniversary of Colonel Van Ness' death six headless white horses are said to gallop frantically around the house at midnight. Footsteps are heard and mysterious knockings. A lady in quaint, old-time costume flits through an upper hall, calling the name of an unknown person.

The wife's mother testifies to having seen the ghost of the Van Ness mansion. She, the mother, was standing in a door opening into the front hall in the second story when she saw a rather small lady, in a very old-fashioned bonnet, run the entire length of the long hall calling "Steve! Steve!"

The attention of the writer was called to the concrete by a mechanic. It is a peculiar red color and is less than an inch thick, and the art of making it is lost. No concrete made today would last at all unless spread much more thickly.

The slowly crumbling concrete and the fading memories of the mournful figure of the Lady of the Mansion fitting through the long corridors alone remain of the splendor of this most beautiful and most celebrated of Washington's haunted houses.

INTERESTING CURRENT CHAT IN THE CAMERA CIRCLES OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

THE township does not always lead to the White House, and it is not always the good fortune of the photographer to reach Congress. In this column recently reference was made to a photographer who had found a place in the Senate, and now, by way of contrast, I will mention a photographer who missed the nomination to Congress...

My attention has been called to this by noticing in the current number of the "Delimitator" a reproduction of a photograph entitled "The Hour of Prayer," made by one of the most active members of the Photo-Secessionist School...

The selection of a proper title for a picture is not the easiest thing under the sun, and many an artist of merit who could give the public much pleasure by the expression of his message has fallen short in the selection of a title. Much has been written about the want of harmony between the picture and the title...

Mr. J. W. Erwin, of San Francisco, is in the city and has called at the Camera Club to meet and exchange greetings with his fellow-amateurs. Mr. Erwin is an enthusiastic amateur photographer and a prominent member of the San Francisco Camera Club...

Mr. Charles A. L. Pearson, of Woodstock, Ohio, a well-known contributor to photographic magazines, has recently been appointed an assistant examiner in the Patent Office. Mr. Pearson at one time contributed a series of articles to the "Camera" on the manufacture and use of "Plain Paper"...

The Postal Photograph Club of the United States, at a recent business meeting decided to hold its annual "meet" in this city during the week of May 12 and to carry out this arrangement committees were appointed to attend to the necessary details...

The business of the club is all carried on by correspondence, and the monthly albums are shipped by express from one member to another according to a route list arranged by the secretary.

FIRST NIGHT PERFORMANCE AT A WASHINGTON THEATRE

THERE is a new race being developed in social Washington--that of the first-nighter at the theatres--and so marked is its progress this season that the familiar figures of Broadway are being fairly rivaled.

Once a first-nighter, always a first-nighter, has passed into an axiom in the metropolitan and near-by theatres. In New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago, St. Louis, or Cleveland, always a first-nighter in Washington, is its variation at the National Capital.

The members of the Cabinet are equally irregular in their attendance, and at present Secretary Root alone may be described as a theatregoer. The Senators who figure most conspicuously at the play are Hanna, Lodge, Dewey, and Wetmore...

The Russian Ambassador favors few performances, and is attracted only by transcendent merit, but his adopted daughter, the Countess Marguerite Caspary, is frequently present, escorted by one of the secretaries, and attended by her dame de compagnie, in which case she occupies an orchestra seat.

Stilson Hutchins, with head uncovered, for the orchestra stalls and covered for the boxes, is a belle at the play. The accomplished daughters of Mrs. Barney, the artist, one of whom is an amateur actress of rare ability, are often in a box, as are the Misses Lester.

The Old Guard, too, is well in evidence--admirals on the retired list, famous beaux and bon vivants--all help to swell the typical Washington first-night audience. There are great occasions when Admiral Schley fairly divides honors with the star actor before the footlights as he bows from his box, and others, when the Admiral of the Navy himself is carefully scrutinized to note the effect on a hero's susceptibilities of the emotionalism of a celebrated actress.

Among his present membership may be mentioned F. A. Waugh, of Burlington, Vt.; Frank R. Fraple, of Boston, Mass.; Osborne I. Yellott, of Towson, Md., and J. Horace McFarland, of Harrisburg, Pa., all of whom are frequent writers on photographic subjects and the authors of text-books on photography which are recognized as standard works.

The owner of a large manufacturing concern in Worcester was at this time very much in need of a capable business man who could take up the details of the business and relieve the proprietor of the burden which had broken down his health. The place was offered to this energetic young man and as a result of this opening Washington lost from her camera club one of the cleverest amateurs, and Worcester gained a wide-awake, well-equipped man of business.

The ladies usually come with uncovered heads, lightly draped or bare, save for some adornment of the coiffure; the men in regulation evening dress. Now and again a smart trowler, or an electric bus carrying a family party varies the procession of carriages and herds, and, perhaps, once or twice a week the now well-known equipage of the White House Lewis saunters along up to the entrance of the theatre.

The boxes at the play are often as good as a comedy. Shining lights of the play-tocracy of Dupont Circle and Massachusetts or Rhode Island Avenue sit in one, fringed by the minor members of the Corps Diplomatique, with perhaps a bachelor Minister or a detached Charge d'Affaires.

These handsome and clever sisters, daughters of former Senator Farwell of Illinois, Mesdames Reginald de Kovacs and Chaffield-Taylor, occasionally appear side by side in a box. The former is brunette; the latter, rather fair than dark and one of the great beauties and belles of the day. One may be wearing blue and the other rose-pink in the evening. Mrs.

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