

## Haunted History of Halloween

TO MOST PEOPLE today, Halloween means fun and games, trick or treating, and telling spooky stories late at night when people's imaginations are vulnerable. However, hundreds of years ago, Halloween was a most sacred holiday which people honored and revered.

Halloween actually means holy or hallowed evening, because it was the day before All Hallow's or All Saints' Day which fell annually on November 1. Hundreds of years ago the Celts, who occupied France and the British Isles, thought that November was the beginning of the year and the festival of the sun god.

These Celts believed that on New Year's eve, which is commonly known today as Halloween, the Lord of Death gathered together all the souls of the dead who had been condemned to enter bodies of animals to decide what forms they should take for the next year. The good souls entered the bodies of other human beings, while the bad souls were punished by entering the bodies of animals.

CATS ARE common symbols seen during Halloween, because the Celts held the cats to be sacred. They believed that cats had once been human beings and had been changed into that form as punishment for evil deeds. Another popular belief at the time was that all souls that had died within the last 12 months could return home on Halloween for a few hours and see their families once again.

Because the new year also honored the sun god, all the people would celebrate the festival by lighting great bonfires on hilltops. These fires

were also made to frighten the evil spirits who were released on that special night. For several days beforehand, young boys would go around begging for fire materials to make the bonfire, which probably created the familiar tradition of Beggar's Night, the night before Halloween where kids "beg" for their trick or treats one night early.

The Celts also believed that some women sold themselves to the Devil and could be seen riding their broomsticks to hilltops where they would wildly dance with imps and goblins to the Devil's music played on castanets made of dead men's bones.

TODAY'S POPULAR Jack-O-Lanterns were created by the legendary stingy man named Jack. He was barred from heaven because of his stinginess and forbidden to enter hell because he played practical jokes on the Devil. So, Jack was condemned to walk the earth with his lantern to light his way until Judgment Day.

When the Romans conquered the Celts in Britain, some of their customs were added to the previous ones. The Romans, who celebrated the harvest during Halloween, originated the feast honoring Pomona, goddess of fruits. Dunking for apples, cider drinks, and nuts came to symbolize this feast.

Few people still honor the solemnity of Halloween, but how many people would volunteer to spend this very special night alone at a graveyard, knowing the "legend" that spirits are supposed to rise from their graves and haunt the living? Would you?



## The Listeners

By Walter de la Mare

"Is there anybody there?" said the Traveller,  
Knocking on the moonlit door;  
And his horse in the silence champed the grasses  
Of the forest's ferny floor:  
And a bird flew up out of the turret,  
Above the Traveller's head:  
And he smote upon the door again a second time;  
"Is there anybody there?" he said.  
But no one descended to the Traveller;  
No head from the leaf-fringed sill  
Leaned over and looked into his grey eyes,  
Where he stood perplexed and still.  
But only a host of phantom listeners  
That dwelt in the lone house then  
Stood listening in the quiet of the moonlight  
To that voice from the world of men;  
Stood thronging the faint moonbeams on the dark stair,  
That goes down to the empty hall,  
Harkening in an air stirred and shaken  
By the lonely Traveller's call.  
And he felt in his heart their strangeness,  
Their stillness answering his cry,  
While his horse moved, cropping the dark turf,  
'Neath the starred and leafy sky:  
For he suddenly smote on the door, even  
Louder, and lifted his head:  
"Tell them I came, and no one answered,  
That I kept my word," he said.  
Never the least stir made the listeners,  
Though every word he spake  
Fell echoing through the shadowiness of the still house  
From the one man left awake:  
Ay, they heard his foot upon the stirrup,  
And the sound of iron on stone  
And how the silence surged softly backward,  
When the plunging hoofs were gone.

## Great Pumpkin Squashes Insincerity

WHENEVER A HOLIDAY occurs, the day (and night) is marked by the observance and practice of special customs, traditions and rituals. Halloween is no exception. One such custom is waiting up out in the pumpkin patch for the Great Pumpkin.

If a person expects the Great Pumpkin to stop and deliver gifts, he must sit in a sincere pumpkin patch and be sincere. The fact that no one at Niles East has ever seen the Great Pumpkin shows gross insincerity on the part of the student body. This need not be the situation because the Great Pumpkin does exist and with just a little effort anyone can be rewarded with a visit.

For a determined individual to exhibit true sincerity to the Great Pumpkin is difficult. The educational process over recent years has conditioned most peo-

ple to doubt the very existence of the Great Pumpkin and to scorn, heckle, and reject the few who believe. Witness the plight of the sincerest believer of all, Linus.

THE DOUBTERS among us may laugh and say that since the Great Pumpkin does not even appear for Linus, he certainly must not exist. This is just not the case. It is not Linus' fault that the Great Pumpkin has never come to visit. Linus, by allowing Sally to sit with him in the pumpkin patch, was duped by a nonbeliever and inadvertently polluted the sincerity of the pumpkin patch. The heretics might also argue that Lucy ends up leading an unvisited Linus into the house, late on Halloween night every year. The trouble with this statement is that when Lucy forces Linus to give up his vigil, the night is far from over and the Great Pumpkin still could appear. Af-

ter all, it takes Santa Claus the whole night, and they both cover the same territory. Linus is sincere and he tries, but the forces of insincerity are too much for him.

If you are sincere and you sit in your pumpkin patch and the Great Pumpkin does not appear and give you a gift, do not lose heart. It probably was not your fault. Just keep the faith and try again next year.

## Try Some Tricks

Trick or Treat! Money or Eat! As everyone knows, this famous phrase brings delicious goodies to thousands of children all over the United States. It all began when beggars went around to houses on Halloween night begging for soul cakes, in honor of All Saints Day which occurs the day after Halloween.

Yet, the youth of today are being gypped! How many children ever get tricks? Very few, if any. They always get candy, candy, candy. How their dentists love Halloween!

Come on, students of Niles East. Help the "kiddies" of Skokie, and of the world. Give them rotten eggs instead of Hershey bars, or throw ice cubes into their little goody bags to soak them so that all their candy will fall out. Help the kids take full advantage of Halloween; give them something to really remember Halloween by, and for once in your life, let those dentists suffer.

## Support UNICEF

TWENTY-THREE years ago, the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund was started. Its main objective was to provide food and clothing for children in underdeveloped countries. Since then, UNICEF has provided welfare for millions. But it needs funds to keep it going. Some money is donated by the countries it serves. The rest must come from people like us. To help UNICEF achieve its goal the Nilehilite staff is asking all to give what they can

when a child comes "canning" for UNICEF on Halloween night.

It's not just donating to another worthy cause. It's giving to a fund which was started as a universal cause to help ease depression and despair. Of all the welfare funds we can donate to, UNICEF reaches more people in more countries than any other. Besides giving to the children who can afford to get dressed up and go trick or treating, give to those who cannot.

## A Ghastly Yarn

## Vietnam - A Scary Story

IT'S HALLOWEEN. It's time for witches and ghosts and scary stories. There are plenty of scary stories to tell this year. We would like to tell the story of 40,000 men who have died in Vietnam. Some of them died on bombing missions. The bombs haven't always hit their mark. They've poisoned the air, wiped out villages and even destroyed one leper colony. It has cost the United States approximately \$2000 to kill one Viet Cong, yet the war continues.

National groups have called for a moratorium on business and studies as usual November 14 and 15. The Nilehilite supports this action.

WASHINGTON WILL be the center for moratorium activities. Several buses have been chartered to bus Niles students to Washington. The Nilehilite urges every individual to participate in Moratorium activities. For those who cannot be in Washington, Chicago activities are being coordinated. Several teach-ins will be held and leafleting will be done throughout the area.

Each man must make the decision to act upon which he believes to be right. In the words of Eldridge Cleaver, "If you're not part of the solution, you're part of the problem."



**HOW TO FIND AN ANSWER TO YOUR QUESTION.** Shut your eyes and turn this page three times, keeping it open at this page. Keep your mind fixed on the question you are going to ask. Then, while still blind, try to touch one of the figures in the tablet with your finger or a pencil. If the pointer falls outside the tablet there is no reply today. Try again tomorrow. But, should the pointer touch one of the figures, turn to the answers, and against the corresponding number you will find your reply.

The tablets should not be consulted more than once a day, nor should the same question be asked by the same person more than once a week.

**THE SPHINX REPLIES**

If the Figures are Right way Up

1. Put your fate to the test now.
2. Tomorrow will be better.
3. Thursday is the day.
4. You are too impatient. Wait.
5. Sunday.
6. Do not delay.
7. The answers are ready.
8. Tuesday.
9. On what day were you born? Try on that.

10. Saturday would be better.
11. There is nothing to be told.
12. Monday will be fortunate.
13. Do not hesitate.
14. Try on Friday.
15. Wednesday.
16. At once.

If the Figures are Reversed

1. It is not advisable today.
2. Yes, at once.
3. Any day but Thursday.
4. Leave it as it is.
5. No, not on Sunday.
6. Wait seven days.
7. Do not try at all.
8. Wait till next week.
9. Before very long if you keep your temper.
10. Not on any Saturday.
11. Secrets wait.
12. Monday is unfortunate in this connection.
13. Make sure of your own mind before you try.
14. Good fortune waits.
15. Certainly not.
16. Not at all.

# I AM A WITCH!

By Claudia Harris

I am a witch. Unbelievable as it may seem, I am a witch. There is another witch in Niles East — her name is Jacki Brittan.

I became a witch before I was born. I was having a race with my brother toward my parents to see who would be born first. I was winning, but he was calling out the directions from behind. I took a wrong turn, got lost in a dark forest (dark forests aren't good for witches, I found out later) and was saved by a witch. She became my fairy-godmother and has helped me, and plagued me ever since.

Jacki became another witch. She has her full powers constantly. I have mine on my fairy-godmother's string.

For the record, witches do not fly on broomsticks, have warts on their noses, turn people into frogs, or put curses on every second person that comes along. But witches do control the weather, put curses on people that deserve it, go through all or some of the exotic rituals that people think are outdated, and have contact with supernatural characters. Yes, we hold seances. Yes, we burn candles. No, we can't just snap our fingers. If we want something, we have to work for it, just like everyone else. Only not quite like everyone else.

I have changed the weather countless times. A few cases in point are last year's homecoming (1968), last Prom, and for a while during that long downpour of rain this summer. Last year while I was very sick, Jacki worked day and night on getting me well. I was out of the hospital a week early and back in school 5 weeks early. Together we have gotten people dates, gotten people out of dates, put them in the hospital, gotten them well ahead of time, and just generally made people miserable. One thing I better get straight right here, most witches love to make mischief.

Normally, we don't make lasting or really harmful trouble, just little trouble. The main idea is — don't get a witch too angry with you, because even if she doesn't do anything about it, she has many powerful friends. Of course, it takes a great deal to make a witch that angry with you because she has seen so many cruddy things already. (Yes, Virginia, there is a Purgatory.)

This halloween, have a little pity on us. It's our worst day. We're expected to go flying around and it's just not in us. This year, buy a black candle for your friendly witch down the street.

## Nocturnal Visits Not in Proper Holiday Spirit

While little children are walking from house to house, their hearts filled with glee as their bags fill with treats, where will the students of Niles East be on Halloween night?

Many of them also will be out trick-or-treating, but mostly tricking. Houses gift-wrapped with rolls and rolls of tissue, gummed doorbells, soaped windows — a varied collection of calling cards.

Halloween means many things to different people. To some it is breaking windows and throwing eggs. To others, it is bobbing for apples, dressing in costume, and going to parties.

Originally, having religious significance because it falls on the day before All Saints' Day, Halloween has come to be connected with many superstitions and symbols. People once thought that on Halloween ghosts, spirits, fairies, witches, and elves came out to harm people.

In early times in the U.S., Halloween was an occasion for playing harmless pranks, but in later years pranks became more destructive.

Let's make Halloween a time for fun for everyone. Don't spend yours being cruel and destructive.

## Mystical Deeds Foretell Future

Besides mystical and supernatural happenings, Halloween is the time to foretell the future. Hundreds of years ago, priests would foretell the future by cutting open an animal and predicting what would happen from the animal's entrails.

Today, ways exist for anyone to know the future before it happens. All one has to do is to perform some sort of ritual on Halloween. One such rite is to go out of the front door backward, while picking up some grass or dust and wrapping it in paper. If it is placed under a pillow, one will dream with certainty of what the future holds.

Another easy feat is to eat a crust of hard bread before going to sleep, and any wish will come true.

For anyone who is handy in the kitchen, whip up this dish for supper: it is known as "call-cannon" or "colcannon," and it consists of mashed potatoes, parsnips, and chopped onions. A ring, a thimble, a china pig, a doll, and a coin are all stirred into it, and when it is served, the one who finds the ring will be married within a year, the one who finds the doll will have children, the one who finds the

thimble will never marry, and the one who finds the coin will be wealthy. Sounds yummy, doesn't it?

The primary predictions on Halloween have traditionally been fortunes concerning love. For instance, if you peel an apple and throw the peelings over your shoulder, the shape of the peeling will tell the initial of your sweetheart.

Because mostly girls are preoccupied with their love prospects, most of these mystical rituals are for the girls. A girl throws a ball of blue yarn out the window after dark and holds one end. Then she must wind it over her hand from left to right. If the charm works, the end of the yarn still out the window will be held by someone so that she can wind no more. Then she asks, "Who holds?" and the name of her sweetheart will be wafted through the window by the wind.

If a girl is daring, just before midnight, she can go out alone, unseen by anyone, to a brook running south and dip in it the sleeve of a shirt, taking it home and hanging it to dry by a fire. Then she should go to bed, but staying awake until midnight in the hope that she might see her future husband come and turn the sleeve to dry on the other side.

Another mysterious venture for a girl is to carry a candle along a dark hall or down a staircase in the hope of seeing the face of her future mate in the mirror held in her other hand.

And if you're frightened of the dark, put a glass of water with a sliver in it beside your bed and say before falling asleep,

Husband mine that is to be  
Come this night and rescue me

and you will dream of falling from a bridge into the water and the spirit of the man you will marry will rescue you.

Although these ceremonies are mostly for girls, there is one rite a boy may undergo. A blindfolded boy may be allowed to choose one of three bowls. If he chooses the empty bowl, he will remain a bachelor, if he chooses the bowl containing the muddy water, he will marry a widow, and if he chooses the bowl with the clear water, he will marry a young bride.

Most people will probably be afraid to perform any of these mysterious practices, but if you're courageous, or just plain curious as the case may be, don't forget that you must act only on Halloween. If you chicken out this year, you'll have to wait another whole year before you get the opportunity to know what the future holds for you.

