

Things in Motion ...

All things are in motion and nothing is at rest...you cannot go into the same (river) twice. --Heraclitus (540?-480?)B.C.

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THIS IS the time of year when those who believe in God give thanks for the spectacular changes in scenery and temperature as well as the fruits of this year's harvest ... and those who believe in nothing wrap themselves in seasonal pleasures, foregoing the comforts of life as sustained by devine intention. For all of us, it is a time of enchantment fit for celebration.

My first experience of Halloween in a city came in 1942, in Cuthbert, Georgia, the town where I was born in 1931. I had lived my earlier years on the farm, and my earlier celebration of Halloween was limited to the Halloween carnivals held at the elementary school I attended. Farm kids did not engage in Halloween pranks more devious than bobbing for apples at the community church party.

In Cuthbert, the word was passed for fifth and sixth grade boys to gather on the school grounds after dark on halloween night—and ten and eleven year old boys were not about to miss the chance to indulge in mischief—not when we could do it behind masks. We knew nothing of “trick or treat” then.

Our first target was the home of the boy's basketball coach. We crept along a ditch in the street beside the coach's house, our intention being to remove all furniture from the front porch and place it in a pasture nearby. The coach was as shrewed off the court as on it—he put his porch light on just as we were about to reach for his furniture—we ran for at least three blocks before we stopped.

Next, we tried the old paper sack by the front door trick, but no sooner was it burning than the front door opened and a five-gallon bucket of water was thrown on the porch and on those close by. We ran another three blocks.

We tossed acorns at windows next, but ran again when the porch light was flipped on. By then, all the running with little to show for it was wearing so thin that my two neighbor buddies and I decided to leave the crowd and work our way home. We plied our tricks for four blocks, swapping porch furniture between houses, hanging chairs high up on telephone poles, hiding mats in the shrubbery and never being caught in the act—it was a wonderful Halloween! If the residents of College Street knew which goblins were guilty, the word never got out—we three never again did tricks on Halloween; one night of such thrills was enough.



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