

Oldtimers,

by Henry Lorang

“You’re an oldtimer if you know how to play “Loo”, Flinch & Euchre & Pedro or “High-five”. If you can remember when men parted the hair in the middle, when they wore peg-top pants & button shoes & fancy white vests, pleated-bosom shirts without collar & cuffs which were separate from shirt & were made of rubber or celluloid. The collar stood high under the chin and a lever button at back of neck and front so as not to break the celluloid when putting it on. The cuffs were round and about 4 inches wide with levered grips to hold on to sleeve and levered cuff-links inserted through eye-shaped holes.

Where neck-ties were worn a real wide scarf hung-down or a real narrow bow-tie about ½ inches wide and a classy tie was made of two different colors in each half of the tie (Cuff buttons were usually heavy so they would rattle when one shook hands.)

The coat –not jackets- were long and when buttoned, only top button was used so that the heavy watch chain & locket could be noticed as it crossed from a vest button hole to a vest pocket where the watch was carried and later the watch was carried in top of pants at the end of a watch fob hanging out.

A plug-hat derby was a must and pinc-nez glasses with just plain window glass that were kept on with a pincers that clamped on the nose at the inside corners of the eyes & had dainty gold chain fastened through a small hole in the outer edge of a lens & the other end had a hook over an ear to keep glasses from falling and breaking.

Women of course wore real long skirts & one didn’t dare show an ankle & the waist line was so laced that a man who had long fingers could girth the smaller ladies waists. (They had to wear girdles and invariably starved themselves almost to illness to attain the disered effect.) Their blouses or waist were usually white and starched with ruffles down front & on the cuffs & many wore collars & ties & cuffs with links. If the whole dress was of the same material there usually was a balloon puff at the shoulder & the rest of the sleeve was skin tight. A handmaid or handy husband was needed to button the dress at back. Hats in winter had great ostrich plumes imbedded in simulated beaver and come Easter one didn’t dare not to come out in the spring hat made of light straw or white fluffy material with broad brims and all of last summers dried flowers- or a facsimile thereof on top of brim all way round. Coats varied but were long-fur signified riches. Shoes of course

were buttoned and sox who knows? “



Henry Lorang 1912

Christne Lorang, upper left and her friends 1910



John Lorang and Mary Gesellchen Lorang, Feb. 1884.

