

Coal \$3.50, Suits \$8.80; Among Bargains in 1890

It's Too Late, Too, to Buy a Big Lot for "Only \$500"

"Lots, \$500. Between Avenues C and D. Measure 25x150. Easy payments; small deposit. See C. M. Colville, 717 Avenue D."

But don't believe it!

This "ad" really appeared in a Bayonne newspaper. But that was 40 years ago!

The present-day reader is just 40 years too late to buy one of the lots at \$500. The price today, of course, is nowhere near that sum.

Many other things were cheap in 1890, when the above newspaper announcement was printed. Judging by other newspaper "ads" of the time, money went a long ways in the 90's—though there may not have been so much loose cash around.

Boys' all wool overcoats, \$2.75.

Boys' suits, \$1.49.

Boys' suits, excellent values, \$2.50.

Men's all wool suits, \$8.80.

Ties, beautiful colors, 25 cents up.

But Styles Have Changed

An entire outfit in those days wouldn't have made much of a dent in the modern workman's pay envelope. But, then, probably the laborer of today wouldn't wear the clothes of 1890 at any time.

Bayonne in the 90's was a busy spot, from a business standpoint. There were many alert merchants, progressive for their day. And they believed in newspaper advertisements.

A local newspaper of 1891 gave editorial page space to a declaration of Richard Mansfield, theatre owner and producer, who said: "The man who doesn't read the newspapers doesn't attend the theatres. I'll do all my advertising in the newspapers; no more lithographs for me."

Which proves that, way back in 1890, the value of newspaper advertising as compared with other mediums already was being discovered. And Bayonne merchants agreed with Mr. Mansfield, judging by the amount of advertising found in old files.

Boosted Home Trade

The "ads" in those days were smaller, most of them, than is the vogue nowadays. They were less effectively presented. But this is not surprising; the art of printing has progressed far in 40 years.

Merchants here in the 90's were agitating for home trade. They were

not worried so much about business going to Jersey City, which could be reached by horse cars as they were about pocketbooks migrating across the river to New York.

"Why shop in New York?" was the cry of the day, and it was echoed in many of the merchants' advertisements.

The "wine, liquors and ales" business, of course, was well represented, and in this field a good share of the city's business was transacted.

Perhaps some of these old names will bring back memories to a few old timers:

Once-Familiar Names

The Schamrock House, John O'Brien proprietor, Isabella and Linnett streets; The Palace, opposite Bergen Point railroad station, mixed drinks a specialty; C. G. Hendrickson, Avenue D at Thirty-first street; Peter Brady, Jr., liquors and "segars," 229 Avenue D at Ninth street; Nicholas Carroll, Cottage street and Hobart avenue; The Half-Way House, Neil O'Donnell, proprietor, 324 Avenue D; Mark Robinson's Pool and Sample Room, 358 Avenue D; and T. Reinhardt, 40-42 West Twenty-fifth street, who featured "free home deliveries."

All of these places, of course, have become but memories—and only the oldest of the old-timers can recall them. What sort of businesses have taken over these old stands? What is on the premises now?

The prices of the pre-Volstead liquors were not mentioned in the newspaper "ads"—probably because they were so low they weren't as much of an inducement to clients as was the friendly atmosphere of preferred places.

Casual perusal of copies of newspapers published in Bayonne in the 90's is apt to cause sighs of regret at some changes that the years have brought.

In a corner of one issue, for instance, is the following:

"Effective next week the following prices will be effective on coal sold at retail at the dock: Egg, \$3.50; Stove, \$3.50; Chestnut, \$3.50. G. C. Smith."

An exhibit of Egyptian beads and necklaces, representing various ages from the Old Kingdom (3000-2500 B. C.) down to the Roman Empire and the Christian or Coptic period in the early centuries after Christ are to be seen in the Field Museum in Chicago.