

# CHAVARI

A Chivari (Chari va ri) was a small town custom whereby the people would come to the home of the newly married couple and get them to come out of the house by making a racket with kettles and bells. The object was to have the couple come out and be transported up town in a lumber wagon, buggy, or some other type of crude conveyance.

There the newlyweds, by tradition, were expected to 'treat' the crowd with pop and candy bars. Because it was expected of them, the newlyweds as a rule put up with it. They would try to accept the Chivari good naturedly, hoping that financial burdening, even at a nickel a candy bar and a nickel for pop, wouldn't add up to too much. Sometimes the men in the crowd would get cigars. The kids came along to kibitz and receive treats forthcoming, so the Chivari was probably secretly enjoyed as part of the small community's recognition of the marriage.

When my uncle and aunt, Homer and Viola Green, were married and moved into the little red house by the Masonic Lodge, they were treated to a Chivari. It was 1936 and the man who owned the garage brought a wrecker with two welding tanks hanging on the hoist. Several were beating on the tanks with hammers, a couple of men were shooting shotguns into the air, and there were other noisemakers. Then we went inside for cookies, pop, and candy. I swiped one of the cigars and later tried to smoke it. I don't remember if I had any ill effects afterwards.

I got married in the fall of 1948 and moved in with my in-laws on the farm while waiting for our own place. One evening, my brother-in-law and his wife came and got us, presumably to play cards. They took us down to Cherry Valley by the schoolhouse. There was my brother-in-law's wheel barrow that he used to clean his barn with (well-cleaned). I had to wheel my wife Gladys in the wheel barrow from the school up to the gas station.

Then they separated us and took me out to the Grant Ballroom where I was expected to buy drinks for all the men (about seven or eight). Big embarrassment. I had only a dollar and some change with me. My brother-in-law had to pay for the drinks. I really felt bad about that. On the other hand, we had no warning so I was not prepared to buy.

Written by

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