

Two Number Puzzles from an Old Source

These two puzzles are from the book *fun with figures* by J. A. H. Hunter, published by Oxford University Press of Toronto in 1957. I have two volumes of his puzzles, plus for years his puzzles appeared as “fillers” in newspapers. So, I sort of cut my teeth on problem solving by using J. A. H. Hunter.

(1)

No Catch in This

Say! My digits are three,
But what can they be?
Take a third of my first
From half of my third:
And a minus, right here,
Would, of course, be absurd.

Now add twice my middle
To continue the riddle,
If you figured it right,
Then you can't have got seven;
For, believe me, I know
That you must have eleven.

There's no catch to this,
But don't take it amiss
When I add one thing more,
Just to make it quite clear:
You should know that a five
Is no part of me here.

(2) The Old Soldier

Ron's grandfather is an old soldier, many times a veteran, for he enlisted way back in 1890. He was relating some of his adventures, and Ron sat there taking in every word. But after one particularly lurid episode the boy interrupted” “Gee, that was exciting. But what year was it?”

The old man took a dollar from his pocket. “You'll get this if you figure it out,” he replied. “If you exchange the second and the fourth figures you make a date ninety-nine years later than what I'm telling of.”

Ron couldn't do it in his head, but what would you say?

Thinking of old soldiers, a few years back (no more than ten) I saw an article saying that the last American Civil War widow had just died. How can that be, the American Civil War ended in 1865?