

Hoosier Vagabond

By Ernie Pyle

NEWPORT, Ore., Oct. 7.—Would you believe that there are people who travel clear across the United States and spend the winter in this town, just to go out on the beach every day and hunt for rocks? Well, it's true. They are agate fiends.

An agate, as you know, is a pretty rock. It is extremely hard, and when you cut through it or polish it you're likely to find any picture from Whistler's "Mother" to "The Battle of Waterloo," all drawn out for you by nature.

An agate in the raw looks just like any other rock. That's where the fascination of agate collecting comes in. You don't know until you polish up your rocks on a grinder, what magnificence you have uncovered that day.

Agates are by no means rare. They are, I believe, found in every state and practically every country on the globe. They're found on sea coasts, in mountains, on the desert. And yet, this little town comes about as near being the agate capital of America as any place you could name.

For 75 miles, up and down this beach, are found the greatest variety of agates anywhere. There are five agate-processing and selling shops in town. At least a dozen and half people make their full-time living from agates, and others exist partially from agates. Agate hunting and selling has been a business here for more than 50 years.

Pretty Serious Business

Agate hunters fall into two groups—the professional and the amateur. The professional goes at it coldly and without that wild look in his eye. But the amateur—ah, there you have a man with buried fires in his heart! His hobby knows no compunctions.

Newport's greatest amateur, probably, is a kindly, gentle ex-shipper under name Will Grigsby. He and Mrs. Grigsby came to Newport four years ago. For 18 years he had been a printer on the Kansas City Star.

He says, "I'm poor and half sick and don't know

what will happen." But he keeps on hunting agates, good weather or bad.

He has hundreds of beautiful agates on shelves in his house. He has a shed full of whirling wheels for grinding and polishing; in the yard lies a ton or two of waste and discarded rock; he trades rock collections with people all over the country.

Will Grigsby never sells an agate to a tourist. He sells only on mail orders. And that isn't very much; just a few hundred dollars a year. He does it only to get a little money to support his hobby. The most he ever got for an agate was \$3.

Another agate collector is James F. Baird, the mayor of Newport. There was a time when he had every agate wrapped up in a separate cloth, and got them out every night and studied them. But now they're just dumped in pasteboard boxes, and he sees them only when some interested stranger comes along.

Moss and Water Agates

Probably the most fascinating and the best-liked by tourists is the "moss agate." It is simply a weird little colony of mossy tendrils, sometimes hundreds of them, around which transparent rock has formed. It is the moss agate that produces the precious pictures.

A rather rare specimen is the "water agate." This is a rock with a cavity in the center. There is water in this cavity, and in the water is an air bubble.

When you hold the rock in front of a light bulb, you can see the bubble move back and forth.

Will Grigsby says the average among hunters is about one "water agate" out of every 1000 rocks picked up. But he has found more than 200 of them. They really aren't of much value. They'll dry up inside if you aren't careful. Will Grigsby keeps his in a bowl of water.

An agate is the seventh hardest known stone. They are cut with powerful circular saws running in diamond dust. Earl Ruddiman, who runs one of the agate shops here, uses \$150 worth of diamonds a year.

Ruddiman has been an agate man for 19 years, and so was his father before him. He doesn't think much of the agate business, though. I'm sort of inclined to agree with him.

It Seems to Me

By Heywood Broun

NEW YORK, Oct. 7.—Some very competent observers have said that the New York Yankees are the finest baseball machine of all time. There is no way of proving such a statement, but in my own humble opinion the contention is correct. At least it's the best team I've seen in 40 years, which is going back far enough.

It is also a club which leaves me cold and dispassionate. I'd rather watch the Brooklyn Dodgers. And certainly nobody has ever handed them any laurels. Most of all, it is the Yankee infield which keeps me very calm in the middle of conflict. There ought to be a law. It should be broken up. Just when the other side becomes dangerous Crosetti and Gordon and Dahlgren bob up with a double play. It is all done with such aplomb and grace that even the most startling stop looks easy and unimportant. I don't care much for grace in a professional athlete. I like Tony Galento.

Once I would have said that the most exciting of all sports spectacles was a World's Series ball game. Now I don't think so, and it isn't my arteries, because I do get a thrill from the heavyweights who sometimes slip and stumble.

Larry Doyle Was More Fun

Gordon is, in my opinion, the finest of all second basemen, perhaps the greatest of infielders. So what?

Larry Doyle, who used to fumble two or three in a row and come up laughing, was more fun.

Worst of all, neutrality has gripped the national game. In New York, particularly, the roosters applaud good plays, no matter which side makes them. This

may be the beginning of civilization, but it is also the end of big league baseball.

When Home Run Baker smote circuit blow at the Polo Grounds off Rube Marquard and later off Matty, not a cheer was raised. The miscreant from Philadelphia trotted around the bags enveloped in hostile and deadly silence. He was of the Athletics and we were of the Giants.

Partisanship even came into the press box. Buck O'Neill was wont to roar instructions at his home team, to which they paid not the slightest attention.

I think that in his kindly way Grantly Rice did great damage, although I know the sweet singer from the South intended no harm. He began to print ballads about its not making any difference whether you win or lose—it's how you play the game, my boys, it's how you play the game. And that is the fatal heresy which draws all the blood out of the heart and the bleachers.

Ah, for the Days of Old

If Three-Fingered Brown had been accepted in New York as Matty's equal on the mound and as a character just as noble, who would care to pay to watch the pitching duel? I know that people still buy seats at the parks, but there will be no standees until Armageddon has been restored. We are rising up on the diamond and in the grandstand a bunch of umpire lovers. Clubs put on Ladies' Day, and shortstops are fined for strong language. Bah!

What has become of Bad Bill Dahlem? Nobody ever held up Bugs Raymond as a target for emulation, and quite obviously Dan McGann chewed tobacco—which is something you wouldn't want your little nephew to do. Ty Cobb came tearing down to third, and when he slid the sun twinkled on his spikes. He came in riding high.

Those days are gone. No longer do I care what much whether the home town wins or loses. Baseball isn't baseball any more. We have cricket on our hearts.

Three Arrested

Three persons were arrested in a two-car collision at New York and West St. George Kelly of 2220 Central Ave. and Joseph Devlin, 523 E. Ninth St., were arrested on charges of drunkenness and vagrancy. James Ulrich, 3006 Buckle St., was held on drunkenness and disorderly conduct charges after an auto driven by Mr. Kelly struck one operated by Dale Allen, 1540 Park Ave. Mr. Allen was bruised. Mr. Devlin lost several teeth and was cut about the face.

Gannis Taylor of 457 W. 17th St. was bruised when he was struck by a car driven by Hugh M. Glenn, 1057 W. 34th St., at 16th and Mill Sts. Police arrested the injured man on a charge of drunkenness.

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Mr. Valinet was represented by Kiser, Cohn & Shumaker, investment firm. Mr. Herff was represented by Jackiel W. Joseph. The western half of the estate was sold to Gregory & Appel, Inc.

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