

**DESTINATION:** Grain cars in the Cleveland Grain Co. yards. Purpose: Get samples of grain for the Indianapolis board of trade inspectors.

Gene Wisniewski, sampler, carried a 10-foot wooden ladder, heavy crowbar, a large wire ring of boxcar seals, a big hunk of canvas, and 20 sample cloth bags. I was right behind Gene stumbling along with the idiot stick. That's what the men call it—it's not my idea.

The real name of this five-foot, 10-compartment gadget is sampler. It looks like a brass band leader's baton.

"We'll start here with this corn car," Gene said, leaning the ladder against the car.

With the crowbar he tore off the seal. The hair on my head stood on end. Sealed boxcars, I was taught in my youth, were supposed to remain sealed.

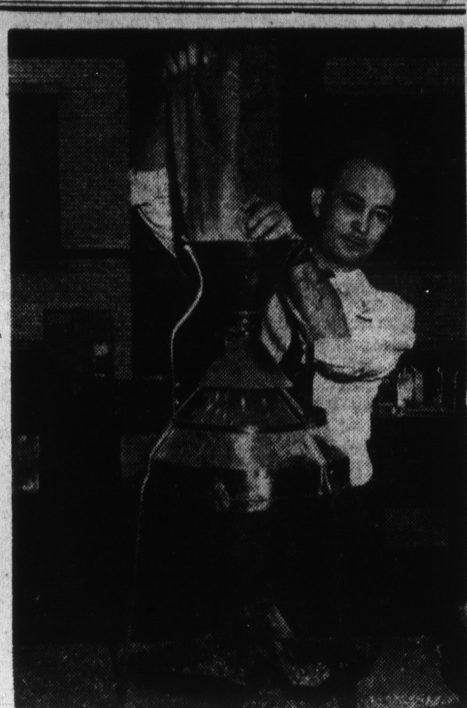
"Hey, Gene," I called, waving the idiot stick wildly. "Is this O. K.?"

"Sure—we can do this on the job. We keep a record of the seals and after we get our sample we re-seal them," Gene assured me.

The boxcar door didn't yield immediately so Gene thumped it a couple of times with the crowbar. Then using the bar as a lever he gave a jerk and pulled the door open.

A high board fence affair was in the doorway which kept the corn from spilling out. The ladder was placed against the boards.

"Let me have the idiot stick," Gene said.



**CORN OFF THE BOXCAR**—Buyers are waiting and Inspector George Check rushes a sample through the mixer.

**Disappears Into Car**

VERY DEFTLY Gene tossed the stick through the small opening on top of the car. A sample bag and the canvas cloth followed. Gene scrambled up the ladder and disappeared into the car.

By the time I climbed up and looked in, Gene was spilling the second sample of corn from the idiot stick on the canvas cloth. He has to take five samples from each car. One in the center, on opposite sides of the doors and opposite corners of the car. Sinking up to his knees in corn he started for the end of the car for his third sample.

The idiot stick is designed to take samples of grain at various depths of the car so there's no chance of slipping anything into the car that isn't supposed to be there.

After all the samples are taken the canvas is folded in such a way that the corn pours out easily into the sample bag. Quite a trick to pouring as I found out later.

After the car was resealed Gene said: "As long as you're here, take the crowbar and open up the next three cars so we can get through faster." Sure thing.

The seal came off easily with the help of the bar. The door, however, wouldn't open. Try as hard as I could it wouldn't budge. Thumping it like Gene did, didn't do any good. I was bushed. I had failed.

Gene came over, knocked a latch up and swung the door open.

"Try the next car," Sure thing.

A few minutes later Gene came again and took the bar. I was ready to beat myself over the head with it. He got the door open.

The next car was full of oats.

"How would you like to sample this one?" Sure thing.

Jumping over the boards into the oats I found myself up to my knees in the stuff. And talk about dust—gah. I got the samples all right after much sniffling around but when it came to pouring it into

the bag I spilled the whole works. Gene took over from scratch.

While I was pouring oats out of my shoes, trousers, topcoat and digging it out of my eyes he completed the sampling. I had a feeling that I had failed.

Three other Board of Trade samplers converged on us with 19 bags of grain.

**Hurries to Get Samples**

BYRON CARTER, foreman, told Gene to hurry the samples back to the office. We did.

At the offices, four government licensed inspectors were waiting to process the samples and send them out on the exchange floor for the buyers.

Inspectors A. T. Morris and George Check immediately emptied the bags into mixers. Chris Wisniewski, chief inspector, took the corn from the mixer and placed it into small cans to bring up the temperature of the grain before it was tested.

Then the corn was run through the moisture tester. Inspector Tom Dudley poured corn on a light table and counted it for damage. Samples were weighed. All the information about the grain was noted on a slip which was signed by the inspector and the sampler. In no time at all, the corn that had recently been in a boxcar, was in a tray on the exchange floor.

"Gene," Chief Inspector Wisniewski said, "go on back and sample the 10 cars that just rolled in."

"You coming along?" Gene asked me.

"Well—you see—I've got a hunk of oats in my eye," I answered.

Gene understood.

**Officers**

he Decatur Cen-  
s and girls 4-  
ed today.

ers are Grace  
Beth Mimsch,  
Dorothy Murphy,  
m. Anne Rose-  
sester, news re-  
ner, song leader;  
recreation leader,  
John, health  
as Nelson Jay,  
rosena, vice pres-  
urphy, secretary  
onald McKinney,  
in Seerley, health  
tor, and Harley  
nt-at-arms.

**Customs Agents** By Frederick C. Othman

WASHINGTON, March 31.—I don't know why congress is worrying about the treasury department firing nearly all the tough bobbies in the blue uniforms, whose greatest joy is rumpling the suitcases of travelers so they can't be shut again.

This would be a wonderful world without customs agents. I know. They have been making my life miserable on and off now for 20 years. Maybe I look like an international spy. When they see me coming I get the works.

First time I tangled with 'em was when I drove to Canada. This was during prohibition and I didn't mind so much; it didn't take me long to reassemble my automobile.

Years later I went to Mexico, where the chicha-bom-chic music got under my skin. I bought a dozen Mexican phonograph records and so help me the man at the border said, unuh. I said, why?

**Mexican Records Ruined**

HE LOOKED me up and down and said how did he know my records didn't have secret messages on 'em? He said he'd have to play 'em. He did so. He used a rusty nail for a needle and my records never sounded like music again.

Another time on the way home from Mexico I brought a water pitcher of soft, tawny silver. It was a beauty. It had cost me a pretty penny. The customs agent said I'd been stung and then he walked across the room to the scales, banging my pitcher on the metal-topped counter as he went. "Yep," he said, weighing my pitcher, "it's not worth the money."

It wasn't, either, not with the dents he'd put in it. Last year, arriving at Orly airport about noon outside Paris, I discovered the joy of no customs

agents. I'd heard these French luggage rumplers were tougher even than our own and I worried about 'em. I shouldn't have.

They were out to lunch. Their office was closed. I never did see 'em. My suitcase could have been filled with emeralds, opium, or atomic secrets and I wouldn't have known it.

I went on to Italy. Again, no customs agents. As a well-disciplined American, I made a determined effort to find them. The Italians in the station were amused.

**Empied His Pockets**

FEELING BETTER about the absence in Europe of these two-legged barriers to international goodwill, I made my carefree way to Belgium. There I was jolted into the feeling of being at home again. A Belgian in blue said how much money did I have? I said about \$385. That was true and I tried to explain that I had a money order waiting in Brussels. He presumed, as so many customs agents had presumed before, that I was a bald-faced, lying millionaire.

He searched me. He emptied my pockets and he patted me for suspicious bulges (the bulges all were me). He was a disappointed man when he found \$385. I came home and in New York was a customs agent waiting. "So you're the Othman who's been filled with mean pieces about us," he said. I said, yes and my suitcase was full of uranium, except that the crannies were stuffed with stolen oil paintings. "Nuts," he said. He wouldn't even look.

So he got fired last week, along with most of his helpers, because the treasury said congress didn't appropriate enough money. If congress hires him back, it will be against my best advice.

**Busses Are Stars** By Erskine Johnson

HOLLYWOOD, March 31.—Three 25-year-old double-deck rubberneck busses of New York's glamorized Fifth Avenue coach line pulled to a groaning and wheezing stop at Hollywood and Vine the other day.

They had chugged 3850 miles from New York in 31 days, at the dreary speed of 19 miles an hour, rattling on en route the movie, "It Happened on Fifth Avenue."

The three busses had a total capacity of 240 passengers but because of insurance policies only six men made the trip—three drivers who got \$25 a day, a mechanic, a tour manager, and a press agent.

Eight thousand people got free rides, however, for a block or two in 214 cities along the way.

**\$17,000 Budget**

A FELLOW in Phoenix, Ariz., got a ride because he said, "I proposed to my wife on a Fifth Avenue bus." But when they tried to photograph him he blushed. "No, thanks. I'm here getting a divorce."

Budget for the trip was \$17,000, with the bill for gasoline and oil amounting to \$1200. There were several breakdowns. One bus got a new engine, but there were no flat tires.

Until their discovery by Hollywood for their publicity value, the three busses, already "retired" by the Fifth Avenue Coach Line, were destined for the scrap heap.

Now a new career awaits them in Hollywood. They will be rented to film studios at \$150 a day, with a dozen or more movies needing them for New York background purposes every year.

**Confidence Charm**

DARBYL ZANUCK is hoping to break the jinx that beauty contest winners seldom succeed in Hollywood. He'll soon introduce green-eyed, round-faced Jean Peters as Tyrone Power's leading lady in "Captain From Castile." A year ago Jean, from Canton, O., was working for a teacher's degree at Ohio State university. Then she was crowned campus queen and won a trip to Hollywood and a screen test. Mr. Zanuck saw the test, gave her a contract, some quick dramatic lessons, and then showed her into Power's arms. "I was a little frightened, never having acted before," Jean told me, "but I knew the director knew what he was doing." Jean obviously has the confidence it takes. She also has the charm to be the current girl friend of millionaire Howard Hughes.

Just once I'd like to meet a screen mugg who was one. They all turn out to be Jekyll and Hydes. Like George Tobias, George is one of Hollywood's foremost gourmets. He has the greatest private collection of classical music records in America. He is one of the top authorities on 16th and 17th century music. But on the screen he specializes in truck driver and gangster roles.

**We, the Women** By Ruth Millett

I CAN HARDLY wait for Mother's day to roll around this year. That's the only day left, it seems, out of the 365 days of the year that is absolutely a closed season on motherhood.

On the other 364 days everybody feels free to take a pot shot at Mama.

I, for one, am getting good and tired of running for cover every time somebody decides that mama is responsible for practically everything that is wrong with the world.

**Mother Is Ridiculed**

ONE DAY they tell her she has failed miserably at her job of "being a woman" because of the shameful divorce rate.

The next day she's told she is a failure because

she is no longer important in the economic scheme. In short, labor-saving devices and two children instead of eight have almost cut her out of a job.

There are even those who ridicule her for not straightening out the world when she got to vote.

**Ego Needs Bolstering**

POOR OLD mom. She is taking a beating these days. Anyone who wants to be quoted, to sell a magazine article, or get a book printed just has to find something new that's wrong with mama.

Being a mother, I am getting tired of dodging all the ammunition being fired in my direction.

How many more days are there till Mother's day anyway? That's what I want to know. And the eulogies had better be good this year. Mama's ego needs bolstering.

**Crazy Inventions Have Thrown Patent Office Behind In Its Work**

**Searchers Needed to Work on Backlog**

By DOUGLAS LARSEN  
NEA Staff Writer

WASHINGTON, March 31.—Peace has diverted the concentrated efforts of U. S. inventors from swords to suitcases with wheels.

And the switch from wrinkles for war to contraptions for comfort has been carried out with such enthusiasm since V-J day that the U. S. patent office has been thrown two years behind in its work.

If it is true that Russia is raising American patents, as some congressmen claim, the Russian people are in for a new revolution. This one should end with them all making borst in new fangled pressure cookers and sleeping out frigid Moscow nights under thermatically controlled electric blankets.



**ONE:** Our mythical inventor, Dr. Oscar Mixmister, tired of inventing weapons of war, starts cooking up something he hopes will be a great boon to the comfort of man.



**TWO:** After days of boiling, mixing and stirring, our Dr. Mixmister feels he's getting close to success. What's cooking, doc? That's a secret until you look below.



**THREE, AND EUREKA.** It's a success, says Dr. Mixmister, who registers ecstasy as he samples his great discovery—chocolate flavored glue for sealing envelopes. Next stop is the patent office, where some of the ecstasy will wear off when Dr. Mixmister discovers there are about 132,500 patent applications ahead of him. Post-war enthusiasm of the doc (and countless other inventors) has thrown the patent office two years behind in its work.

**GADGETS AND INVENTIONS** dealing with "music, acoustics, glass, buildings, furniture, claps, sound recames, kitchen and table articles, toilet goods, education, cutlery, and flexible panels and partitions" are included in the patent office's three top groups of applications.

Although the patent office is granting an average of 400 patents a week to inventors, there is still a backlog of about 132,500 applications awaiting action.

Details of patents—and this applies to most applications made since the war—aren't revealed until the patent is formally registered.

There is a suitcase with wheels,

IN THE scientific field a majority of applications for patents now deal with chemistry and electronics. Most of these are for some peace-time application of a military discovery or device.

The Official Gazette of the patent office, published every week, reveals the latest list of patents which have been granted to inventors. The current issue tells of a "plant patent" granted for an apple tree, to a California man. According to the patent, this tree produces apples "the size of a Norfolk, with transparent skin which glows with the color of the pink flesh beneath."

**ANOTHER PATENT** just granted is for a tooth brush with the tooth paste in the handle. It automatically squeezes into the brush while you use it.

a cuff that covers baby's hand to stop thumb sucking; a bottle holder device for baby carriages; an ice cube tray which is guaranteed to take the profanity out of getting ice from the refrigerator.

Did you ever notice how the back of women's stockings get splashed when they walk on wet sidewalks? Well, a tiny mud guard gadget which fastens around the heel of the shoe has been patented to stop this.

**LAW REQUIRES** The Patent Office to sell copies of registered patents to anyone who wants to buy them. The current price is 25 cents.

Rep. J. Parnell Thomas of New Jersey, chairman of the house un-American activities committee, charges that because of this law Russia has been "lapping the inventive genius of America's indus-

trial and military brains" by buying up copies of all registered patents. The patent office explains that one of the reasons for the two-year backlog, in addition to the increased number of applications, is because so many of its expert "searchers" left during the war and never returned.

**EACH APPLICATION** requires a "search" through all other related patents to make sure it doesn't infringe on one already granted. It takes an experienced expert to do a good job of this.

In 1945, a total of 31,083 patents were granted. Last year it dropped to 27,587. This year, patent officials hope, the figure should be somewhere between the two. The last patent office budget was for \$7,379,000.

For the coming fiscal year an additional \$2 million is being asked so that a start can be made toward reducing the backlog.

**'If Spring Be Near—Can Circus Be Far Behind?'**

'Bev' Kelly, Press Agent, Has Already Started Extolling Wonders of Ringling Brothers

By LEO TURNER  
United Press Staff Correspondent

NEW YORK, March 31.—F. Beverly Kelly blew into town today like a spring windstorm.

"If spring comes, can the circus be far behind?" asked Mr. Kelly, who spends the winters thinking up new adjectives to describe the "greatest show on earth," the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey circus. Mr. Kelly spends his winters at Delaware.

"Delaware, O.," he said.

"Hard by the Delaware?"

"Where the Delaware tribe 'Sat around flickering campfires.'"

"But let's talk about the circus."

For the first time anywhere, I repeat, anywhere, new spectacles, endearing, enticing, enthralling.

Even a press agent must breathe, although some people wonder why. So Mr. Kelly paused to catch his breath.

**Slightly Descriptive**

"For the first time in America," he continued, "the Cathalans, unparalleled precisionists on the rolling globes; riding Bostocks, bareback riding champions in equestrian thrills; Rhodin's trained brown bears; Orlando's educated polar bears, the emolument of courage and patience of Arctic brutes; Guerre's sea lions demonstrating subsidiary prowess unlimited; the Alazanas temerarious exploits on the high wire, the Medinis in new daredevilry on unsupported ladders."

He took another breath.

"Reverhos, the equilibristic marvel on the slack wire, who walks the wire high in the big top, juggles with his feet and hands, and figures his income tax simultaneously."

"The Cimises in a transcendently spectacular thrill presentation on motorcycles high in the tent where daredevilry beggars description and where life hangs by a slender thread."

Raquel Nelson's "educated feet in the lexicography of equilibristic feats" almost got lost in Mr. Kelly's flood crest with:

**Income Tax Cut Prospects Fade**

Senate Couldn't Beat Truman Veto

By LYLE C. WILSON  
United Press Staff Correspondent

WASHINGTON, March 31.—Personal income tax reduction for this year looks like a dead duck unless President Truman has changed his mind. He is publicly committed against a tax cut and it is not likely that congress could beat a veto.

The house tax reduction bill passed last week by a bare two-thirds majority. All but three house Republicans recorded voted for it in an impressive show of party discipline. But 40 Democrats also supported the bill. A veto probably would chip away some of that Democratic support.

There is no such Republican party discipline in the senate as in the house. Senate Republican leaders already are disputing not only the method of tax reduction but whether it shall be considered now or be set aside to cool.

**Upholding Veto Likely**

A veto would be more likely to prevail in the senate than in the house. A veto kills legislation if either house fails to override it by a two-thirds majority.

This is a setup for Mr. Truman if he wants to challenge the bill either on grounds that tax cuts are unwarranted or that the cake is cut too thin in the lowest brackets. If he does not veto the tax bill, someone around the White House will have to eat some words from Mr. Truman's January budget message, as follows:

"There is no justification now for tax reduction. As previously indicated, I cannot recommend tax reduction. At the present time, in my judgment, high taxes contribute to the welfare and security of the country."

**Wants Debt Reduction**

Mr. Truman said he wanted any available surplus money to be devoted to debt reduction. Congress also is arguing with itself about that.

House Republicans voted that Mr. Truman's \$37,500,000,000 spending budget for next year be cut by \$6 billion. The senate voted to limit the cut to \$4,500,000,000. So far house and senate have not been able to agree on a compromise figure.

The unexpected, bulge in government income over expenditures could be cited by the White House as reason for backing away from last January's veto threat.

**Miners Wrote Death Notes As Fatal Gas Drew Near**

Messages Given to Families of 15 Of Centralia Blast's 111 Victims

By LYLE C. WILSON  
United Press Staff Correspondent

CENTRALIA, Ill., March 31. (U. P.)—Without hysterics or heroics, 15 of the Centralia coal mine's 111 victims waited more than half a day to be rescued from the 540-foot gas-blasted pit. Then the scribbled farewell notes to their wives and families.

The notes were found in the pockets of the men, who lay down to die in an underground room approximately a mile from the center of last Tuesday's explosion.

The last of the notes—typed at 6:30 a. m. Wednesday—said: "It is sleeping in on us."

The writer referred to the deadly blanket of carbon monoxide gas which spread through the tunnel after the 3:30 p. m. blast.

**Messages Personal**

Written on scraps of paper which had served as sandwich wrappers and on sheets torn from a pocket note book, the brief messages were mostly instructions for clearing up personal affairs, declarations of love, and a plea from one miner that his wife make sure their children attended church regularly.

The 15 men apparently had made no effort to brattle the doors of the worked-out coal room in which they were found.

What ventilation remained after the explosion carried the fumes down the tunnel, past their "door," and then, almost 15 hours later, into into every nook and cranny of the mine.

Rescuers found the men lying in the room as if they had merely stopped for a rest before proceeding to the shaft and safety. One miner had rolled his coat into a pillow and curled up on the hard floor.

**Notes Given to Wives**

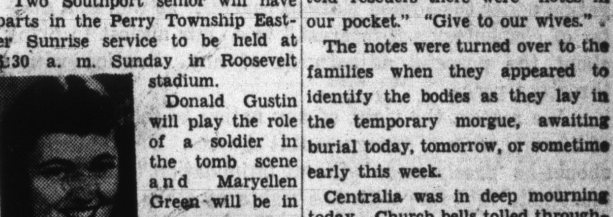
A large note, lying on the floor, told rescuers there were "notes in our pocket." "Give to our wives."

The notes were turned over to the families when they appeared to identify the bodies as they lay in the temporary morgue, awaiting burial today, tomorrow, or sometime early this week.

Centralia was in deep mourning today. Church bells tolled throughout the morning and afternoon as one funeral procession followed another through the streets.

**Southport Pupils In Sunrise Rite**

Two Southport senior will have parts in the Perry Township Easter Sunrise service to be held at 8:30 a. m. Sunday in Roosevelt stadium.



Maryellen Green, the pageant. The high school glee choir, directed by Mrs. Charmion Kaiser, will be accompanied by Irma Swickard.

**Young Republicans To Hear Jenner, Gates**

Young Republicans of 17 Midwest states will assemble in Terre Haute for the annual meeting of the Council of Young Republicans April 25.

More than 400 were expected to attend.

Highlights of the two-day parley will be a luncheon address by U. S. Senator William E. Jenner and a banquet at which Governor Gates will be principal speaker.

**'Ball' Pen Maker Seeks Round-World Flight Record**

Hopes to Cut Howard Hughes' Time In Half Over Longer Route

By LYLE C. WILSON  
United Press Staff Correspondent

CHICAGO, March 31 (U. P.)—Milton Reynolds, who rocketed to business fame and fortune with the ball-point fountain pen, said today he would take off next Saturday on a round-the-world flight.

He said he would try to break Howard Hughes' record of three days 19 hours and 14 minutes.

Mr. Reynolds will share time at the controls of his converted Douglas A-26 attack bomber with another pilot, Capt. William Odom of New York.

The 54-year-old executive-sportsman said he hoped to be able to "cut Mr. Hughes' time in half," and that tailwinds forecast for the flight should permit the ship to average around 400 miles per hour at 30,000 feet.

The flight will begin at La Guardia field, New York, at one minute after midnight, Saturday morning. Mr. Reynolds said flight clearances from most of the countries over which the plane will fly were obtained as long ago as last August.

Mr. Reynolds said his flight would be about 6000 miles further than that flown by Mr. Hughes.

"Mr. Hughes was allowed to fly over Russia," Mr. Reynolds said, "so he was able to take the shorter Great Circle route. My flight will take us from New York to Paris, Cairo, Calcutta, Shanghai, Tokyo and either Anchorage or Fairbanks in Alaska."

The third man aboard for the flight will be T. C. Saller, the flight engineer.

The National Aeronautics association will check Reynolds' time against Mr. Hughes' official figure of 91 hours, 14 minutes and 28 seconds, set July 10-14, 1938.

The twin-engined A-26 has been stripped of 8500 pounds of armor plate and the horsepower increased from 4000 to 4800.

**Carnival—By Dick Turner**



Let's put it this way, madam—you don't see us returning your check every month, do you?"