

Babe Ruth

By Robert C. Ruark

NEW YORK, Aug. 2—I have held off comment on a moving picture—it is a picture, and it does not have motion—called "The Babe Ruth Story" because of inability to think up anything sufficiently scathing.

This triumph of the cinematic art will be seen by several million people, and will probably net a couple million bucks, but it would have been mighty nice if they'd burnt the film after the sneak preview.

We have few enough legends, and George Ruth is one of them. For inexplicable reasons, he is up there with George Washington, Daniel Boone, Paul Bunyan and Jack Dempsey. Some respect as a unique character is due the man, because Ruth in the pagan sense is as much a god as Hercules.

It is a crime against the legend if this and subsequent generations form their ideas of Ruth from the moving picture, which is an appalling libel on the man and the era which produced him.

All the sins of which Hollywood is intermittently accused were committed in the Ruth story—and for no reason unless you count stupidity as a reason.

The unvarnished story of Babe Ruth, as told 11 years ago by Paul Gallico and more recently in the book by Bob Considine, contained enough meat for five movies. Mr. Considine is listed as a co-author of the movie script, which I can't believe, since nobody alive had more respect for Ruth.

Everything Done on Giant Scale

RUTH was a character straight out of Rabais—a gross, profane, simple giant, whose vast excesses violated every rule in the nice-Nelly lexicon. And which, oddly enough, comprised a considerable portion of the man's greatness. They loved him despite his early sins, and worshipped him the more when he reformed.

Everything the Babe did was on a giant scale. When he had a bellyache, it was the biggest bellyache ever recorded by mankind. When he took to his bed with that aching paunch, result of a dozen hotdogs and as many bottles of soda pop, no quenched acoochement or kingy gout ever rated so much newspaper space and verbal comment.

The Babe could vanquish a bottle of Bourbon, outwait the dawn, grab a shower, go to the park, play the doubleheader, hit three over the wall,

make the spectacular catch and throw, wolf down a three-pound steak, resume his argument with the bottle—and then do it all over again.

Even his reformation was a dramatic thing, with Jimmy Walker scolding and Ruth weeping and promising to do better, for the sake of all the kids who worshipped him despite his social freebooting.

Ruth Sincerely Loved Kids

HE WAS great because he could and did break all the rules, while still performing more grandly at his specialty than anybody before or since.

He was a wonderful, uncomplicated nature boy—and he never conquered his appetites. He just learned to conduct himself semi-decorously in public, as part of his obligation to the land which idolized him.

None of the essential Ruth ever crept into the picture, a pungent chronicle of a bumbling, oafish clown who spent most of his time weeping over dogs and performing miraculous cures on hopelessly crippled kiddies.

Ruth sincerely loved kids, but he loved them with a brusque man-to-man approach which doubly endeared him to them. He was never a slobber or a spiritual coach to the sprouts who trooped after him.

The picture started as a dead duck with the selection of William Bendix, a typecast Brooklyn cabdriver, to play the Ruth part. Mr. Bendix was chosen over Paul Douglas, who really looks like the Babe, because the picture makers could borrow money from the banks on Bendix' name, while Douglas had no fiscal sex appeal.

They perverted many of the true dramatic excerpts from the Ruth career, for reasons known only to the Hollywood mind, and committed such witless gaucheries as to present contemporary radio broadcasters for commentary on the Ruth exploits.

Both Harry Wismer and Mel Allen were just out of knee pants when Ruth performed.

Outrageous characterization of Miller Huggins and Ed Barrow added to the general inaccurate awfulness of the whole thing, and if I were the Babe, sick or no, I would grab me a big bat and Gabe after everybody concerned with the atrocity.

Ed Sovola, author of *Inside Indianapolis*, is on vacation.

Castor Oil

WASHINGTON, Aug. 2—The subject today is castor oil and its effect upon the body politic. Do not blame 'em. Honest John Snyder, the Secretary of the Treasury, brought it up.

He hurried to Capitol Hill in his \$26 summer suit, which would have cost him \$16.50 before the war, to tell the Senators they'd better revive price controls and rationing tickets while there yet is time. The Republican gentlemen of the Banking Committee gave him a bad time of it.

Sen. C. Douglass Buck of Delaware said it was doggone odd he could suggest such a thing, when the government itself was shoveling out millions supporting high prices for such things as potatoes. How come? Honest John said that was something for the Secretary of Agriculture to answer.

This made Sen. Harry P. Cain of the state of Washington sore. Nobody knew from nothing in the President's cabinet, he said. Didn't they even talk over the situation at the White House? Maybe, said the Senator, he'd better call up all the cabinet officers at once to see if they could get together on what is wrong with the cost of living.

This caused the Secretary of Treasury to get red in the face. He said he wasn't in favor of price controls as such.

"Neither do I like castor oil," he added, as an afterthought.

Doesn't Like Castor Oil

"YOU MEAN it is unpainable," remarked Sen. Charles W. Tobey of N. H. "But is it efficacious? That is the question before us today."

Honest John said castor oil undoubtedly was effective. Sen. Ralph E. Flanders, the Vermont oil manufacturer, went, harumph.

"Does the Secretary of the Treasury believe," he roared, "that castor oil is good for chronic economic constipation?"

Our Secretary of Treasury made the error of smiling. Sen. Flanders assured him he never was more serious. Wasn't castor oil an emergency remedy, useful only for relief of small boys who'd eaten too many green apples?

"Well," began Honest John. Bang, bang, blankety, bang, went Chairman Tobey's gavel.

"Gentlemen," he said, "I assure you that both of you are being old-fashioned. Castor oil is outmoded."

"You mean," inquired Sen. Flanders, "that there is a better remedy?"

"Oh, yes," replied Sen. Tobey. "It is that stuff advertised on the radio. What do you call it? Nature spelled backward, I believe."

Talk About Potatoes Later

THE SECRETARY of the Treasury took a long drink of water, and wished he hadn't said anything about castor oil. The gentlemen returned to potatoes.

"We're all American citizens," said Sen. Tobey. "You're Secretary of the Treasury. And the nation's in a devil of a fix. And now you're trying to restrict bank credit and yet the government is spending millions on potatoes and then selling them back to the people and making them pay twice."

Meekly and yet stubbornly, Mr. Snyder said the Secretary of Agriculture would have to talk about potatoes.

"And don't go blaming the farmer for the high cost of living," shouted Sen. A. Willis Robertson of Virginia. "He's worse off now than he was before. It isn't his fault if the government made a mistake about potatoes."

"I didn't say that," moaned Secretary Snyder. The anguish in his voice was genuine.

And in a couple more days the honorable, the Secretary of Agriculture, Charles B. Brannan, will get to explain about potatoes, and how the government buys 'em for \$1.65 a bushel and sells 'em for one cent to potato-flour makers, who sell 'em back to the government in powdered form at prices yet to be established.

"I'll be there. I may be able to pick up a few bushels of potatoes, cheap."

Yugoslavia Trip

By Ernie Hill

ZADANI MOST, Yugoslavia, Aug. 2—Life here in this part of the Iron Curtain varies amazingly from section to section. There is surprisingly little of the uniformity that might be expected in a Communist country.

Some people have much; many have little. For instance, at the railroad station here at Zadani Most, there's an interesting breakfast menu. It consists of anchovies, caviar, pumpernickel and beer. That is all.

Bread costs 20 cents a chunk and trimmings are free. The proprietor apologizes because there is no champagne for breakfast. Caviar and champagne are a must for a decent breakfast for self-respecting individuals, according to him.

It is necessary to hop off the train for breakfast because the train has no dining car. The dining car "unfortunately" is broken at this time, the railroad officials explain.

At Zagreb, the menu is less racy. It's limited to grey macaroni with pale pink sauce, a few beans, a few tomatoes and some beaten-up-looking lettuce. Either you eat it and like it, or you go hungry. It costs \$1.20.

Diligent Job of Cleaning Up

FROM the lofty mountains in the northwest—which are as craggy as those of Switzerland—Yugoslavia flattens out to the southwest. In the middle are hundreds of miles of cornfields. It might be Kansas.

In the towns, there are people who look affluent. In the fields are women dressed in peasant costumes, with shawls on their heads.

Two-thirds of the field workers are women. At noon they spread out their lunches under trees. Yugoslavia looks as if it has hundreds of picnics going on simultaneously.

Yugoslavia is doing a diligent job of cleaning

up its war wreckage. Two years ago, railroad sidings were littered with burned, bombed and wrecked railroad vehicles. Most of that has been cleared away and tracks and bridges have been repaired.

The Nazis did most of the damage when they were pulling out, the Yugoslavs will tell you.

Small towns and villages appear extremely normal. It is only the big cities, where there are lots of troops, that give you a different feeling.

Everyone Seems to Be Working

MOST impressive perhaps is the industry of the people in the fields and towns. Everyone seems to be working. There are no three-hour stints here as in Italy and Spain.

"We have a lot to do," one Yugoslav told me. "We are a hard-working people. We don't have time to loaf."

Intensely nationalistic, the Yugoslavs pay minimum attention to the outside world. There is little of the cosmopolitan attitude found in Switzerland, Italy and France.

Americans are somewhat of a curiosity to this country's Slovaks, Slav and Serb people. They are not used to hearing English. They don't know much about French, Italian, Spanish or Portuguese either. Their languages are Slavic, Middle European with some German thrown in.

Today, cut off more than ever, the Yugoslavs have retired into their own shells. They keep up with world politics, but most of them say they are unimpressed by the universal struggle for power.

Primarily, this is a peasant country with a peasant mentality. Maybe the people are a lot happier that way.

The Quiz Master

??? Test Your Skill ???

Which state of the Union has the largest river frontage?

The State of Maryland has more river frontage than any other state in the Union.

Has America an epic poem?

No poem has ever been generally accepted as an American epic. Longfellow's "Hiawatha" is called the Indian Epic of America.

What does the Bible say is the root of all evil?

It says that the love of money is the root of all evil.

Who converted the Pantheon into a Christian temple?

In 399 A. D. the Pantheon was closed as a temple and in 608 A. D. it was consecrated as a church by Pope Boniface IV. To this fact the Pantheon owes its preservation.

When did the first naval battle by white men in America occur?

The first naval battle by white men in America was fought on the Little Pocomoke River, Eastern Shore of Maryland, between Claiborne's pinnace, Long Tail and Governor Calvert's two pinnaces, the St. Margaret and the St. Helen.

What is the territorial difference between Palestine of the original 1922 mandate and the Palestine of today?

The original Palestine mandate included Trans-Jordan, now an independent kingdom.

Who invented the Bowie knife?

Its invention is generally attributed to Col. James Bowie, the famous hunter and fighter. Although Bowie used the knife which bears his name, there is no positive evidence that he invented it.

To what country is the tomato native?

The tomato is a native of tropical America and was introduced into Europe in the 16th century, probably by the Spaniards. It was used as food by the wild tribes of Mexico.

What was the original meaning of Bolshevik?

A Bolshevik means a member of the majority. The name originated at an international meeting of Marxists in 1903 and was applied to the majority who advocated immediate seizure of power by the working classes.

For what composition is Humperdinck best known?

The operetta Hansel and Gretel.

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SECOND SECTION

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PAGE 9

Deadly Blights Imperil 165,000 Elm Trees In Indianapolis



IT COULD HAPPEN HERE—These graceful shade trees which extend in double rows as far as the eye can see on Washington Blvd., north of 34th St., are predominantly elm. So far, this section has

been spared in the double-pronged elm epidemic. But similar lovely sections were denuded in a parallel epidemic in Columbus, O.



COLUMBUS RAVAGES—Columbus, O., was struck by two elm blights, Dutch elm and phloemnecrosis, the same two diseases which now are making inroads into Indianapolis tree population. Whole areas such as this stump-dotted pathway in a Columbus park were denuded of trees as a result.

is little apparent difference between the two. In Dutch elm one or more bunches of leaves turn yellow and limp, then that limb dies out. Unless that diseased portion is successfully pruned off, the whole tree dies.

When the virus disease hits a tree or root of the tree and the whole tree seems to die at once.

DUTCH ELM, brought over from Europe some years ago, popped up in Indiana in 1934. At that time the U. S. Department of Agriculture set up an office here

to try to stamp it out. It gave up the proximity of infected roots to the office and the fight two years ago when it was decided the disease had spread too widely to be controlled.

THE diseases attack only elms. The nature of the two leads researchers to draw a parallel between the present elm blight and the chestnut tree blight some 30 years ago, which virtually wiped out the "spreading-chestnut tree" from the American scene.

So far, nothing constructive has been done by the city of Indianapolis to try to "save" the elms.

The park department tries to remove trees as fast as they die, to prevent spread of carriers, but lack of funds makes any widespread preventive spraying impossible. So far this year the department has uprooted 300 trees.

HOWEVER, the growing seriousness of the blight has led the park department to seek a "tree count" to estimate the city's tree assets, and determine what it stands to lose financially in the epidemic.

The Indianapolis Landscape Association and the Indiana Arborist Association are aiding the park department in the count.

With the information obtained from the count, the persons interested in "saving some shade" for Indianapolis will seek appropriations to spend tax money on live elms, instead of dead ones.

Frauds in Export Licenses Charged

WASHINGTON, Aug. 2 (UPI)—Sen. Kenneth S. Wherry (R. Neb.) charged today that a "multimillion dollar fraud" in export licenses contributes to high prices and jeopardizes the nation's economy.

In an article in the American magazine, Sen. Wherry said "forgery, bribery, and illegal sale of official documents" were revealed by an investigation by his Senate small business committee along with "corruption, laxity and inefficiency in the conduct of federal offices."

The Commerce Department has already drastically altered its export licensing procedure as a result of the investigation.



"This club is getting too crowded! With players all over the course, a fella can't fib more than two or three strokes off his score!"