

Girl Against the Channel—

Experts Doubt Shirley's Strength for Crossing, But She's Confident

Tougher Than Boys in School, Teen-Ager Says, Plans Bursts of Speed to Lick Tricky Waters

Second of Four Articles

By SHIRLEY MAY FRANCE
Written for The Times

DOVER, England, Aug. 2 — Some veteran Channel swimming experts have been looking me over and I understand that they don't think too much of my chances. But they are wrong and I think I'll be able to prove it sometime this month by swimming from Cape Gris Nez to Dover.

The reason for their pessimism is that I don't look like most Channel swimmers.

Usually they carry a lot more beef than I do. I weigh 158 but I'm nearly 5 feet 10 inches tall so I don't look as chunky as the swimmers they're used to seeing.

I noticed one famous coach eyeing me yesterday and later he told a friend of mine that I didn't look strong enough for the Channel. Well, what he didn't know is that my coach, Harry Boudakian, has had me toughening up on a calisthenics routine for years.

Tougher Than Boys
I can do more leg raises and situps than any boy in Somerset High. So I'm not worried about lack of strength.

Another Channel expert who apparently had the same idea asked a member of our party how

Robert C. Ruark reminisces on Gertrude Ederle's Channel swim. His column is on Page 11.

he thought I'd stand up to the tides and cross-currents which most swimmers have to contend with.

I believe I've got the answer to that, too. As far as I've been able to find out, every Channel swimmer up to now has a slow, plodding stroke which meant fighting tides and currents every few hours. I've got speed and I plan to use it in spurts if necessary to help get me into a favorable position. I'll benefit from some water movements and avoid others.

Secret Weapon
You might call speed my secret weapon.

Of course, this means knowing every eddy, current and tide. My father and coach are consulting the finest authorities on the waters here to map a route from the French side to Dover. This will take several days.

Meanwhile I'm getting used to the Channel. I had a lovely two and one-half mile workout Monday morning and afternoon and my co-ordination is coming back swiftly after the shipboard layoff.

The Channel is as cold as a mountain lake, but I found that it was a nice kind of cold and after a few strokes I felt warm and comfortable.

I've been making long distance swims ever since I was 6. I am in fine physical condition and I feel as much at home in the water as I do on the land.

They tell me that no 16-year-old has ever beaten the Channel and only 10 women have made it, but I've swum through conditions which people tell me were just as tough as the Channel. I swam for 24 hours without stopping. I figure the Channel should take at the most, 14 or 15 hours.

There are three reasons why I want to swim the Channel.

First, I want to make enough money to help my folks. I want to see them in a nice house, the kind they deserve. And I'd like to earn enough to put my two younger sisters and little brother through school. Myself, I'd like to go to college when I finish at Somerset High and study to become a physical education teacher.

Shirley Indignantly Denies Reports She'll Swim Nude

Wants Ridiculous Story Killed; Trainer of Mrs. Van Rysel Declares She Wore Suit

DOVER, England, Aug. 2 (UP)—Shirley May France, pretty 16-year-old Massachusetts school girl, became indignant today over reports that she plans to swim the English Channel in the nude.

She said she wanted "this ridiculous story killed at once and for all."

Walter France, Shirley's father, said rumor mongers already had got Mrs. Will Van Rysel in trouble back home in Amsterdam by alleging she removed her suit during a channel swim attempt a week ago.

"They're trying to get my Shirley into the same trouble," Mr. France said hotly. "She has never said to anyone in this country that she will swim without a suit."

Denies She Doffed Suit

Ted Fenne, famed trainer of Channel swimming champions and the Dutch woman's coach, said Mrs. Van Rysel kept her bathing suit on during her channel attempt.

"She wore a two-piece suit covered with white grease," he said.

He added that it is neither healthy nor proper for anyone to swim the Channel in the nude.

"A woolen suit is necessary to conserve body warmth," he said. "I know nothing of Mrs. France's plans. I am not connected with or advising her party so naturally I did not know what she planned to wear or not to wear."



Shirley May France... tests channel water.

The second reason is that I want to prove to myself that I can do it. I suppose swimming the Channel is the goal of every distance swimmer. I'm told there have been 400 who tried it and only 25 who made it. I want to be No. 26.

The third reason may sound silly but I really mean it. I hope that my swimming the Channel will make people more swimming-conscious. A few years ago I read about a little boy who drowned out west. He fell in a pond and couldn't swim. The story made a deep impression on me.

I think everybody should know how to swim and how to take care of himself in the water. Every chance I get I try to teach kids swimming. I teach at the "Y" during the winter and I'm always showing kids on the beach how to swim and how to breathe properly.

\$225,000 Fire Hits Plant, 10 Injured

SAN FRANCISCO, Aug. 2 (UP)—Firemen today sought the cause of a \$225,000 fire that injured 10 persons as it destroyed the Kunst Brothers paint factory yesterday.

Workmen caught in the sprawling two-story building had no explanation for the fire.

Smoke rose 200 feet over the plant as 50-gallon drums of paint and solvents exploded.

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UMWA Fund Pays \$35,000 To Senator

Welfare Group Salary To Bridges as 'Neutral' Revealed

By FRED W. PERKINS
Scripps-Howard Staff Writer

WASHINGTON, Aug. 2 (UP)—That \$35,000-a-year Sen. Styles Bridges (R., N.H.) gets paid as a "neutral" trustee of the United Mine Workers welfare and retirement fund has other Senators struggling along on their \$12,500-a-year pay, goggle-eyed with astonishment.

The Senator's sparetime salary came to light yesterday when Miss Josephine Roche, director of the fund, was telling the Senate Banking and Currency Committee how the fund disbursed \$100 million last year for a "low" overall administrative cost of 1.4 per cent, or \$1,400,000.

Includes 'Allowances'
Her prepared statement said this included "allowances" to the trustees. When Sen. John J. Sparkman (D., Ala.) asked her to disclose the amount of the allowances, she said \$35,000 a year was available to each of the three fund trustees—Sen. Bridges, Ezra Van Horn and UMW President John L. Lewis.

But she immediately added, "only two take it—of whom Mr. Lewis is not one."

Miss Roche also said, in response to questioning that the allowances were "salaries."

The story of Sen. Bridges' getting this money goes back to a Saturday morning in 1945—Apr. 10. There was a big coal strike on. Mr. Lewis was due in federal court here the following Monday morning to face Judge T. Alan Goldborough on a charge of contempt for failing to obey an order to stop the strike.

Sunday morning Sen. Bridges flew in from New York and met for two hours with the two original trustees. A press conference followed at which it was announced that the deadlock was practically at an end, but that a final meeting would be held the next morning at the unusual hour of 8:30—Mr. Lewis being due in court at 10.

Monday morning Sen. Bridges submitted a detailed settlement which Mr. Lewis accepted "somewhat regretfully." Mr. Van Horn dissented, but was outvoted by Lewis and Bridges.

Fined Anyway
Although Mr. Lewis promptly called off the strike, Judge Goldborough was not to be mollified so easily and a week later he slapped a fine of \$1,400,000 on the union and \$40,000 on President Lewis.

Such records of the miners welfare fund have been made public indicate that Sen. Bridges has continued to side with Mr. Lewis.

Sen. Bridges' government pay consists of a taxable \$12,500, plus a tax-free "expense allowance" of \$2500. These figure out as equal to a fully taxed salary of \$15,000. The Senator was unavailable for comment on his \$35,000 union fund pay, which comes from a 20-cent-a-ton tax on coal paid by consumers.

Since the welfare fund controversy blew up, Mr. Lewis' union voted to raise his salary as president from \$25,000 to \$50,000. He also gets an expense allowance.

R. B. Hougham Heads Teachers' Fund

Gov. Schriker said today Robert B. Hougham, Franklin, has been appointed to a full term as executive secretary of the state teachers' retirement fund, effective Aug. 15.

Mr. Hougham, who served more than 12 years in the post during Democratic administrations in the 1930's and early 1940's, is the fund secretary now. He was appointed last January to succeed Forrest Carmichael, Columbus, who resigned.

PUBLICITY CHIEF FLIES

HONOLULU, Aug. 2 (UP)—Maj. Gen. Floyd L. Parks was en route to Washington today to become the Army's new public information chief. Gen. Parks took off from Hickam Field last night.

CONGRESSMAN TO QUIT

WASHINGTON, Aug. 2 (UP)—Rep. Alfred L. Bulwinkle, yet-eran North Carolina Democrat, today announced that he will resign the chairmanship of the Democratic National Committee when he quits the Senate.

If both appointees are confirmed, Mr. McGrath's switch to a Cabinet post will create two job vacancies. He intends to resign the chairmanship of the Democratic National Committee when he quits the Senate.

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Delivering Members of Cat and Fiddle Cast



Peter Birch (standing in rear), directing assistant of the Cat and Fiddle production at the Fairgrounds, delivers cast members to the open air stage in his jeep and supervises the unloading. Left to right are Nancy Ford, Violet Hadden, Jane Collins and Harry Propolis. Final showing of the operetta will be Saturday night.

Berle 'Man of Year'

HOLLYWOOD, Aug. 2 (UP)—Comedian Milton Berle was notified today that he has been chosen to succeed statesman Bernard Baruch as "man of the year" by the Parents League of America.

Mrs. Beatrice Jackson, president of the group, said Mr. Berle was picked because of his many charity performances and today announced that he will receive the honor from Congress at the end of the present session.

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