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It Happened Last Night— Allen Sneaks Into Hollywood

'Portland's' Baptism Beats
Down Natural Aversion.

By Earl Wilson

NEW YORK, Sept. 9.—Many a man will be drying babies this week—but Fred Allen will be helping wet one.

The "colossal christening" of the James Masons' daughter, Portland, occurs Friday in Hollywood, so Fred and Portland (the godmother) are flying out, despite Fred's aversion to Hollywood "the land of milk and honeys, the city where the men are mostly cads and the women are mostly pads."

Fred has long since proclaimed that the only way to be happy in California is to be an orange, and that people who stay there get to look like avocados. Besides, he says when the California sun cools off, it turns out to be an 8-ball.

Anyway, Fred's starting his "year off from radio" by going there.

"I'm just going to see the No. 2 production of Portland get launched, but I won't stay," Fred, who's my neighbor, has just told me.

"I've no desire to see the California sun shining on unemployed actors. I'll soon be one myself," he said.



Fred Allen

"Wasn't there a delay in the christening?" I asked Fred.

"Yes. Because of the California drought and hot weather, there wasn't enough water available for the baptism. We're taking our own water with us."

Saddle Pan
FRED HAD just returned from his summer vacation when I talked to him, and was so tan that several horses mistook him for a saddle.

I learned of Fred's return to 7th Ave. from Max Asmus, the pastrami prince, the sturgeonaire, whose Stage Delicatessen Fred had visited at once.

"Fred's back!" Max announced, and I asked how he looked. Max, whose figures of speech naturally run to food, said: "As brown as a bagel!"

"YES," said Fred, when I asked him about it. "I rushed all over town very quickly because I wanted everybody to know I'd been away, and those New Jersey tans don't last long."

"Are you sticking to your plan not to work this year?"

"Oh, sure," Fred said. "When I left radio," he said, "I bequeathed Doc Rockwell, my frequent guest star, to Henry Morgan, and asked Henry to take care of him. Henry hasn't a sponsor and if television keeps on, Doc may have to take care of both of us."

"HOW ARE you going to rest?" I asked Fred.

"I'll work on my mail," Fred said. "I get a lot of letters panning me for my attitude on giveaways."

"Some of them insult me, and I tell them. I've been insulted by people who can spell."

"By the way," I said, "what do you think of television by now?"

"I think," Fred said, "that TV stands for Tired Vaudeville."

... That's Earl, brother.

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