SEEN and HEARD around the NATIONAL CAPITAL

By Carter Field

Washington.—A careful listener could have heard long sighs of relief over the collapse of the senatorial effort to write a more drastic neutrality law. The relief was most pronounced at the White House and State department, but it was evident in many other quarters, notably among senators representing states whose ports and the railroads leading to them thrive on foreign trade. And among Southern congressmen, who feared that in some way or other they would find cotton embargoed if the law were made too drastic.

All of which makes all the activities of Senator Gerald P. Nye so far this session just about a perfect batting average in futility. He tried to smear J. P. Morgan, and the elderly financier emerged with even Nye unable to hate him. He tried to make Woodrow Wilson both putty in the bankers' hands and a liar, and got thoroughly spanked. He tried to force a drastic neutrality law, and the committee on foreign relations, after long consideration, decided merely to extend the present law. Then he attempted an insurgent meeting, even threatening to block extension of the present law in order to force one more drastic, and that is petering out.

There is a great deal of hypocrisy being displayed on this whole neutrality business. Lots of senators would like to see the present law die, and nothing whatever put in its place. They know perfectly well, for example, that the present embargo on "arms, ammunition and implements of war" is just diverting business, which would give employment in New England and other arms and ammunition plants, to similar plants in England, Japan, Belgium and Czechoslovakia. Which is espeially annoying because the shipments of these countries to Haile Selassie's army are being paid for in gold and silver. So there is no danger of either loss or of becoming involved through extension of credit.

Avoid Quotation

But very few people indeed in political life or out of it are willing to talk that way for quotation. They know they would be denounced by the Nye crowd as being willing to take "blood money," at the best, or as being in the pay of the Du Ponts, at the worst. Meanwhile, of course, the very nation that the chairman of the foreign relations committee, Senator Key Pittman, says is likely to make war on the United States—that is Japan— is building up her munitions industry as a result of America's neutrality law.

But that is something else again. The relief over the collapse of Nye's attempt to make the present embargo more drastic, both for the present war in Africa and for any future war anywhere else—except of course in Latin America—is due more to other interests than to arms and ammunition. It extends to the oil industry, and to copper, to steel and to mules. In fact, conditions might arise which would make almost any given product important in the conduct of a war. Whereupon, to be neutral in the Nye sense of the term, it would be necessary for the United States to bar shipments of that commodity. In the opinion of some others, of course, such an embargo would be anything but a neutral act—depending upon whose ox is gored.

The greatest relief of all, perhaps, was in the office of James A. Farley. Not because of his job as postmaster general, but in his function as chairman of the Democratic National committee, conducting the campaign for the re-election of President Roosevelt.

For there is just no way of measuring the amount of grief that a really tough neutrality bill of the Nye pattern could cause in certain states whose electoral votes are very important.

Still Puzzling

Passamaquoddy and the Florida ship canal are still puzzling everybody but President Roosevelt and Budget Director Bell. Best reports are that Mr. Bell is the only New Dealer now satisfied with the President's action in deciding to give congress a chance to vote on whether more money should be spent on these two projects or not. Certainly Mr. Roosevelt has had plenty of grief since he sent them up to the Capitol.

The first big surprise came, of course, when the house appropriations committee decided to sidetrack the two big projects. The President had thought, of course, to get the projects into the regular congressional pork barrel. Then he would retain all the credit for having started them, and congress would be put into the position of approving them as sound.

There is more to this than just the idea of general congressional approval. For in every pork barrel type of bill members have to vote, naturally, for many things they do not approve.

Florida Ship Canal

Representative Green of Florida is leading the fight to restore the Florida ship canal. He has already put the blame for its defeat in the committee on the ship companies, which he says do not want to have their mail carrying fees reduced by having the mileage on trips to gulf ports reduced. The idea of transporting mail from New York to New Orleans by a boat that takes five days, when regular trains make the journey in two nights, seems a bit odd, but attacks on all corporations seem in fashion.

But the point arises: suppose congress sticks by the action of the house appropriations committee? Suppose the end of the session finds no appropriation for carrying on Quoddy and the Florida canal?

The President then faces disagreeable alternatives. He can accept the repudiation for his two projects, admitting right in the midst of his campaign for re-election, that both simply squandered the taxpayers' money on projects which are not going to be finished—and which his own party in congress did not think worth finishing. Or he can still divert WPA or PWA funds for carrying on the work.

In that case, however, he would lay himself open to violent criticism from another standpoint. It would lend force to the argument that congress had actually turned over all its powers to a dictator—that Roosevelt's action in permitting congress to pass on Quoddy and the Florida canal was much like that of a cat which lets a captured mouse run for a couple of feet before pouncing on it again.

New Farm Bill

The statement of Senator David I. Walsh of Massachusetts that the only benefits claimed from the new farm bill are that it would continue the rain of checks to the farmers, and tend toward cutting the value of the dollar—or inflation—has started comparisons between the present administration's farm plan and, oddly enough, the Hoover foreign policy.

Both, it is contended, were "share the wealth" plans as surely as though the late Louisiana Kingfish had designed them. It is the differences that are interesting.

Despite all the clamor about the foreign loans which later went sour, all that the United States, as a whole, lost was goods—just farm products and manufactured articles. The trouble is that they were never paid for, in so many instances. But here is the comparison being made:

Who paid or pays the bill? In the AAA farm plan, everybody who eats and wears clothes, thus being obliged to pay processing taxes. Thus money was taken from all the citizens and given to one class, the farmers, on the accepted argument that the farmers were not getting their share in the ordinary processes of wealth distribution. In the new farm plan, taxes will be more widely distributed, but will continue to hit the same people, the burden continuing to fall more heavily on the poor.

Who paid the bill in the bad foreign loan case? The people who had money enough to buy the bonds, plus some who were hit because their banks and insurance companies invested in them. But by far the greater amount came from people with sizable fortunes.

Who got the money? In the farm bills, the farmers. In the bad foreign loan case, more than 90 per cent of it went to the farmers and the workers of this country. The wicked bankers one hears so much about skimmed a nice fat profit, fat because of the amount, but actually very small in percentage. And of course a sizable fraction of that went to the treasury eventually in income taxes. And some of the "profits" went to bond salesmen, an occupation, by the way, that once used a lot of white collar workers.

Where It Went

But the great bulk of it went to the men who grew the crops, the men who fabricated the goods for wages, the railroad workers who hauled the goods and crops to seaboard, the miners who dug the coal to provide the power, etc.

It was a very real distribution of wealth, which was what the AAA was, and the new so-called conservation plan is intended to be.

There are two important differences. In the farm plans the industrial workers of the country benefit only indirectly—as a result of the increased buying power of the farmers. Whereas in the foreign loan plan both workers and farmers benefited directly. One class of workers, those in transportation, benefited enormously by the foreign loan plan, but have been actually hurt a little by the farm plan due to sharp curtailment of production—hence less freight movement. Incidentally, the stock yards workers suffered even more from the farm plan, though it is promised that there will be nothing so drastic as that again.

The other big difference is in who pays the bills. A much larger proportion of the cost of the farm plan falls on very small income people.

Of course, no one ever called the sour foreign loan system a "plan." It was just a phase of the often decried in brain trust circles, profit motive.

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STAR DUST

Movie • Radio

By VIRGINIA VALE

THERE is a fortune waiting for anyone who can write short sketches, or plays, which can be done on the radio.

Practically every actor and actress who isn't broadcasting wants to try it. Hollywood is full of people who have succeeded on the screen and yearn to do the same on the air.

Robinson.

Now that stars of the stage and the radio have shown that they can walk into a movie studio and become a success, practically overnight, no motion picture star is as secure as he was in the old days. And the only remedy for that situation is a career on the air as well. But comparatively few of these movie folk can sing well enough to broadcast successfully. The answer to that is a sketch. And good sketches are, alas, all too few.

For example, take our friend Mr. Robinson, of "Little Caesar" fame. When he was on the Vallee hour recently, he had to fall back on a sketch that had been done not too long ago—only last summer, if a memory not backed up by notes is reliable.

So—both in Hollywood and New York, anyone who can manage a typewriter is besieged by people begging for "something I can do on the radio." If you can fill that demand, go ahead, and good luck to you!

—★—

We may not see "It Can't Happen Here" on the screen after all. The Hays office has requested that the making of it be deferred, at least, the reason being that the political situation in it might cause mob trouble—and all this after thousands of dollars have already been spent on it!

—★—

Money also went down the drain when "Elegance" was abandoned. Joan Crawford and Clifton Webb were to have made it—Webb is famous for his work as a dancer on the stage. He was at the studio for three months, on salary, working on dance steps. And, then, come to find out, Joan had been working on an entirely different type of dance steps. So they had words, and now the picture won't be made at all.

—★—

Weep for Claudette Colbert. Her Paramount contract permitted her to make an outside picture (she can do one each year,) so she did "Cigarette," in "Under Two Flags," the pay check being $150,000, $50,000 more than she gets on the home lot for a picture. Taxes will cut that down, however, to a bit less than $25,000.

—★—

Loretta Young, who has been off the screen so long because of illness, will have "Unguarded Hour" for her return to the screen.

—★—

Randolph Scott and Fred Astaire are great friends—and Astaire is teaching the tall and elegant Randolph to do fancy dance steps. That is, he was before the arrival of Fred Astaire, Jr., became more important than anyone else in his father's life.

—★—

If you heard John Boles on the air in "Green Grow the Lilacs," and liked his performance, it's too bad that you couldn't have seen the broadcast. John is tall—six feet three inches—and Miss Walker, who made movies years ago, is only five feet tall. She's a delightful person, as you may have guessed from those broadcasts she does with Deems Taylor.

—★—

Jock Whitney, the producer who's gaga about colored films, had two oxen bleached and tinted gold for "Dancing Pirates," his new RKO release. Next thing we know, somebody will turn an animal "Brownette" as a tribute to Jean Harlow's hair. Incidentally, after seeing "Riff Raff," a lot of movie fans begged Jean to let her hair be turned platinum again, but she refused.

—★—

ODDS AND ENDS . . . Seems funny to see Gloria Swanson going places with her tall, spectacled son . . . How visiting movie stars love the night clubs and theaters, when they get to New York on a vacation! . . . Most of them shed their inhibitions and just have fun . . . Not Edward G. Robinson, however; he's been rushing about New York with the best of them, but always remembers that he's Edward G. . . . They say that after the divorce the second Mrs. Gable will marry a title . . . "The Phantom of the Opera" will be made again, with Boris Karloff in the role made famous by Lon Chaney . . . Reginald Denny's daughter will appear in "Little Lord Fauntleroy" . . . Lupe Velez has an amazing collection of emeralds—and likes to wear them all at once.

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A Campaign Is Coming

and it will bring

Songs, Slogans, Symbols and—Slanders!

SONGS THEY SANG IN OTHER PRESIDENTIAL YEARS

By ELMO SCOTT WATSON

LADIES and gentlemen of America! The "greatest show on earth" is about to begin!

No, this announcement hasn't anything to do with P. T. Barnum, the Ringling brothers, "Buffalo Bill" Cody or any of the others who have made circus history.

This "greatest show on earth" is the quadrennial drama of a Presidential election.

So . . . hold your horses, because . . .

A campaign is coming, with its songs, its slogans, its symbols and—its slanders!

The singing is already under way. The other night Senator William E. Borah of Idaho appeared in Brooklyn to make a speech which, it was commonly agreed, was his opening bid for the Republican nomination. At that meeting his followers sang, to the tune of "U. S., That Means Us," the following:

Borah rah, rah, rah,
Ring out his name far and wide,
Borah, rah, rah, rah,
Join the cheer that swells the countryside,
Let all the nation hear his call,
A "fair deal," a "square deal" for all.
Borah rah, rah, rah,
The choice of Americans all.

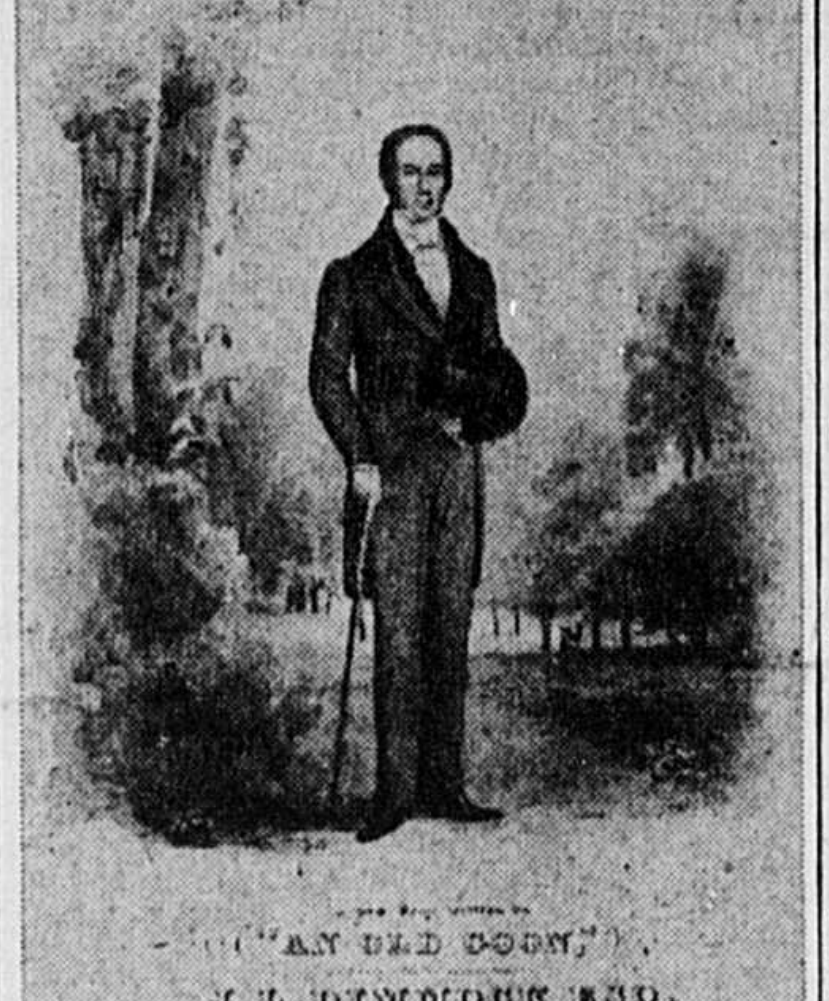
And now that the singing is started it's safe to predict that it will continue right up to November 4. For in campaign year America has always "gone lyrical." It started away back at the beginning of the republic when George Washington was the inevitable choice for first President of the United States. At that time everyone joined in singing

George Washington, the hero's come!
Each heart, exulting, hears the sound;
Thousands to their deliverer throng,
And shout him welcome all around!

All of which adulation for the man who was "First in War, First in Peace and First in the Hearts of His Countrymen!" was very fine, but, of course, politics being what they were even in those early times, it just couldn't last. Washington's second term was far from being a happy one, for by the time he left office there were two parties, the Federalists and the Republicans (ancestors of the Democrats today), engaged in a bitter contest for power.

John Adams was the candidate of the Federalist aristocrats and Thomas Jefferson of the Republican "common peepul." Taxes, states rights and other issues over which there was a sharp division of opinion were reflected in the songs sung during the campaign of 1796. The Republicans, resenting the efforts of the Federalists to build up a strong centralized government, sang:

Huzza, my Jo Bunkers! No taxes we'll pay;
Here's a pardon for Wheeler, Shay, Parsons and Day.
Fix green boughs in your hats and renew the old cause,
Stop the courts in each county and bully the laws.



HERE'S TO YOU HARRY CLAY.

"AN OLD COON,"

J. L. DIMMOCK ESQ.

In Praise of a Famous Kentuckian.

In the next election the Republicans prophetically sang:

Lord, how the Federalists will stare
At Jefferson in Adams' chair.

For Jefferson did defeat Adams and there were eight years of Democratic Republican (paradoxical though that may sound!) rule. But that didn't mean any lessening of political partisanship. The Embargo act, which had nearly ruined New England trade, had made Jefferson very unpopular so that the Federalists during the campaign of 1808 sang:

The motley band of demagogues who rule this happy nation
Has made an end of foreign trade and stopped our navigation.
Embargo's horrid name has drowned the noise of dance and tabor,
And snatched the untasted morsel from the hungry mouth of labor!

So the Republicans had some difficulty in electing James Madison, Jefferson's choice to succeed him, but they did manage to do it and he remained in the White House eight years. He was followed by James Monroe and the famous "era of good feeling" in which political partisanship died down, only to be revived when John Quincy Adams, the son of the second President, was elected in 1824. It flamed up even more fiercely in 1828 when the opposing candidates were Adams, seeking re-election as the standard-bearer of the new National Republican party, and Andrew Jackson, the candidate of the new Democratic party.

"Old Hickory's" partisans, recalling his victory at New Orleans, sang lustily:

We are a hardy, free-born race
Each man to fear a stranger;
Whate'er the game we join in chase,
Despising toil and danger;
And if a daring foe annoys,
Whate'er his strength and forces,
We'll show him that Kentucky boys
Are "alligator horses"!

I s'pose you've read it in the prints,
How Packenham attempted
To make Old Hickory Jackson wince,
And soon his schemes repented;
For we with rifle ready cock'd
Thought such occasion lucky,
And soon around the general flock'd
The hunters of Kentucky.

This campaign, however, was as nothing compared to that put on by the "singing Whigs" in 1840 in support of their candidate, Gen. William Henry Harrison, in his race against Martin Van Buren, the Democratic occupant of the White House. Harrison was literally sung into the Presidency. Early in the campaign a Democratic editor had made the mistake of saying about Harrison, "Give him a barrel of hard cider and a pension of two thousand a year, and, our word for it, he will sit the remainder of his days in a log cabin by the side of a sea coal fire and study moral philosophy."

Immediately the indignant Whigs sprang to the defense of their candidate. They made much of the fact that the Democrats, under the leadership of the broadcloth-clad, aristocratic Martin Van Buren of New York, had deserted the "common peepul" and were casting slurs upon their General Harrison, "Old Tippecanoe," who was a plain man and a poor man. So they began to sing:

Let Van from his coolers of silver drink wine,
And lounge on his cushioned settee,
Our man on his buckeye bench can recline,
Content with hard cider is he.
Then a shout for each freeman, a shout for eacl State,
To the plain, honest husbandman true,
And this be our motto, the motto of fate,
Hurrah for old Tippecanoe.

And on this wave of singing hysteria another military hero was swept into the Presidency.

Four years later Van Buren was seeking the Democratic nomination again but he was turned down and the prize given to the first "dark horse" in political history—James K. Polk of Tennessee. Even before this happened, the Whigs had nominated Henry Clay of Kentucky, who had tried twice before (in 1824 and again in 1832) to be the Democratic standard-bearer. Theodore Frelinghuysen of New York was named as his running mate, so again the Whigs swung into a singing campaign shouting.

Hurrah, hurrah! The country's risin'
For Henry Clay and Frelinghuysen!

The Democrats were capable of doing a bit of vocalizing themselves, so they sang right back:

Farewell, oh! farewell to thee, Clay of Kentucky,
We'll leave thee to wander by Salt River's shore;
We well might have known that thy cause was unlucky,
For the Democrats beat thee so often before!

That song was a true prophecy, for the Democrats did beat Clay again and elected Polk. But the Whigs had their revenge four years later when again they nominated a military hero and began singing the praises of

Old Zach Taylor, bold and steady
Sometimes "Rough," but always "Ready."

For his running mate they named Millard Fillmore of New York. One of their songs declared:

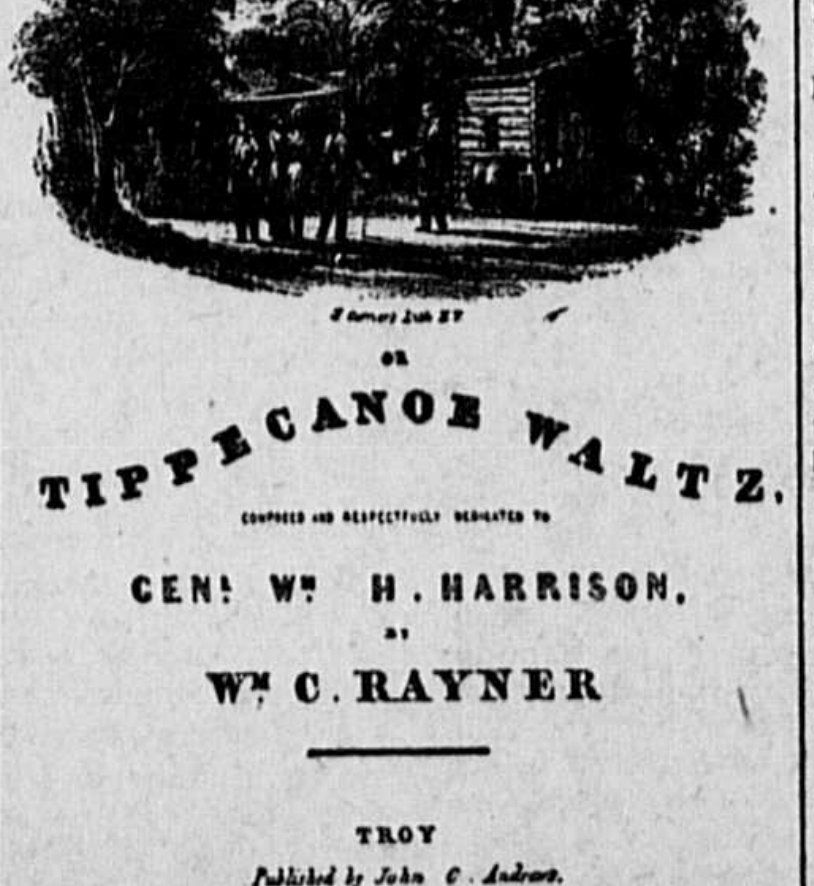
The ball is opened on both sides,
The parties now have made their choice.
Cass on the Loco donkey rides,
The Whigs for Taylor give their voice.
Pull, boys, all pull steady,
For Fillmore and for Rough and Ready.

The Democrats, who had nominated Lewis Cass of Michigan for President and Gen. William O. Butler of Kentucky, a Mexican war hero, for vice president, roared back at them:

They come in Democratic van,
From old Kentucky and Michigan,
Within the nation's seat to shine,
In eighteen hundred and forty-nine.
For every state declares it so,
That Cass and Butler in must go,
Next Fourth of March will prove it so,
For thus have freemen willed it, oh!

But the Whigs were better prophets when they sang:

He's on victory's track, and he can't be put back,
For the people have said that they trust in old Zach;
So our brave Rough and Ready in triumph shall run,
Till the White House is reached, and our victory won!



LOG CABIN

OR

TIPPECANOE WALTZ,

COMPOSED AND RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED TO

GENL WM H. HARRISON,

BY

WM C. RAYNER

TROY

Published by John C. Andrews.

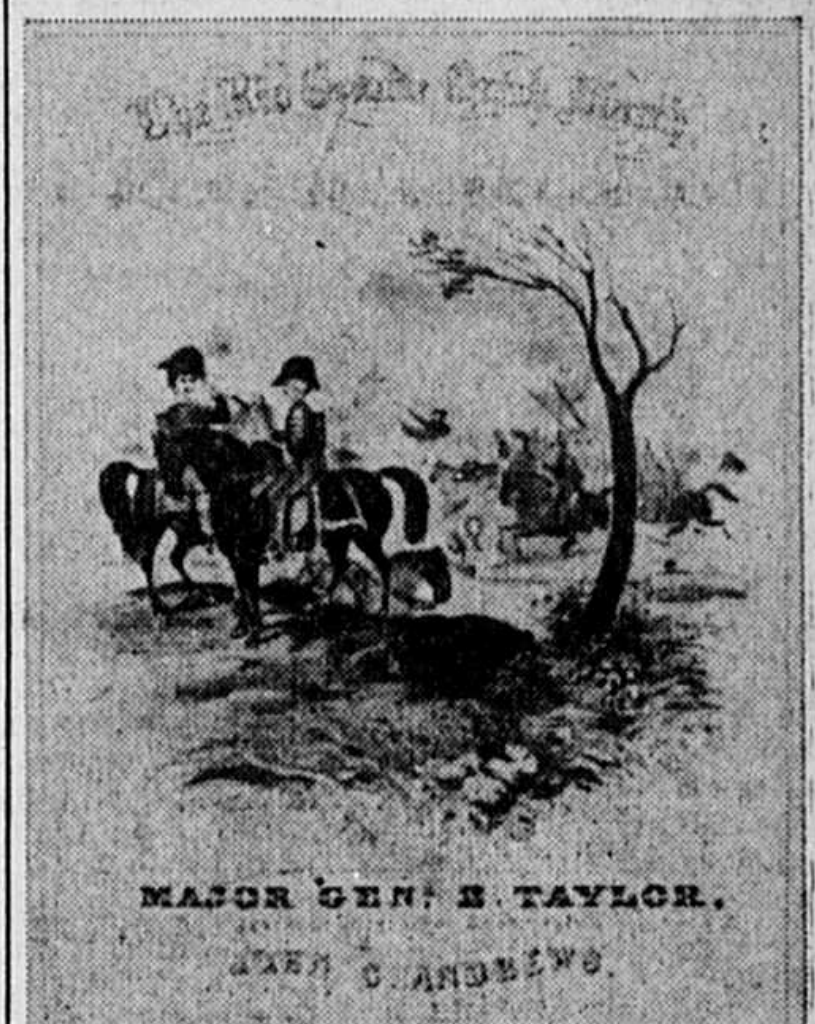
A Campaign Song of 1840.

So "Old Rough and Ready" was sung into the Presidency, just as "Old Tippecanoe" had been.

The campaign of Franklin Pierce vs. Gen. Winfield Scott in 1852 was a comparatively colorless one but 1856 was another case of "whoop it up with song and shouting." The slavery question was the big issue. The "Know-Nothing" party, formed largely of pro-slavery Whigs, nominated Fillmore. The Democratic party nominated James Buchanan of Pennsylvania and the new Republican party in its first national convention nominated Gen. James C. Fremont, the so-called "Pathfinder." Thousands of Free-Soilers, with an almost religious zeal, sang:

All hail to Fremont! swell the lofty acclaim
Like winds from the mountain, like prairies aflame!
Once more the Pathfinder is forth on his hunt,
Clear the way for free soil, for free men and Fremont!

However, the "Pathfinder" couldn't find the way to the White House, for Buchanan was elected. When the next campaign year came around another candidate came out of the West with the affectionate and vote-gathering characterization of "old"—"Old Abe" Lincoln, the Illinois rail-splitter. So the Republicans sang:



MAJOR GEN. Z. TAYLOR.

This Helped Elect "Old Rough and Ready."

Hurrah for our cause,
Of all causes best,
Hurrah for Old Abe,
Honest Abe of the West!

And right back at them the Democrats sang derisively:

Say he's capable and honest,
Loves his country's good alone;
Never drank a drop of whisky,
Wouldn't know it from a stone!
Any lie you tell—we'll swallow—
Swallow any kind of mixture;
But, oh, don't—we pray and beg you—
Don't, for God's sake, show his picture!

Ulysses S. Grant, regarded as the savior of the Union, didn't have much difficulty in winning the election of 1868 so no songs of any importance came out of that campaign. Four years later, when Horace Greeley gave him more opposition, one of the songs which his supporters sang declared that

General Grant's the man
To work for Uncle Sam.
He will lead the van
And beat the Greeley clan.
We'll trust him still to rule the nation,
Rule the nation, rule the nation,
We'll trust him still to rule the nation,
He saved our glorious Union.

During the Hayes-Tilden campaign of 1876, even the little children were familiar with the song that declared

Hayes rides a white horse,
Tilden rides a mule,
Hayes is a gentleman,
Tilden is a fool!

The Cleveland-Blaine campaign of 1884 was noteworthy for its songs, the most famous being the Democratic hymn which declared that

From Maine to California,
The people loudly shout,
"We'll vote for Grover Cleveland, who
Will turn the rascals out!"

The McKinley-Bryan campaigns saw a revival of the Hayes-Tilden doggerel with McKinley riding the white horse and Bryan riding the mule.

When Alton B. Parker and Theodore Roosevelt were the opponents in 1904 the Democrats came out with the lyrical prophecy that

He will always keep the nation's credit safe and sound,
And will oust dishonest men wherever they are found—
He will bury Teddy under forty feet of ground;
Alton B. Parker is his name!

But he didn't. For, to the tune of that popular Spanish-American war song, "There'll Be a Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight," the Rough Rider went back to the White House again.

During the next two decades campaign songs were not so potent as were slogans and catchwords—that is, until 1928 when Al Smith was the Democratic candidate. Then "The Sidewalks of New York," a song of the "gay nineties," was revived and it swept the country into a frenzy of singing. But it didn't sweep it into a frenzy of voting for the Democratic candidate. Even though "Who? Hoover!" as a good campaign ballad, couldn't compare with the "Sidewalks," Hoover was elected nevertheless.

As for the last campaign, every one remembers how the American people, wanting to believe that the depression was over, joined lustily in singing "Happy Days Are Here Again" and in sending the smiling prophet of that belief to the White House.

What will be the outstanding song of the 1936 campaign?

That question can be answered better on the morning of November 5 than it can be answered now!

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FLAME IN THE FOREST

By HAROLD TITUS

Illustrations By IRWIN MYERS

W.N.U. SERVICE

Copyright By Harold Titus

SYNOPSIS

Kerry Young, a lad of seven, is prepared to flee the burning lumber camp of his benefactor, Jack Snow, who took the youngster to live with him at the death of Kerry's mother. Tod West has instructed Kerry to come with a file containing the camp's funds should it be endangered. Flames attack the office, and Kerry, hugging the precious file, and Tod race to town. Tod acts queerly. At the bank the file is found empty and Kerry is blamed with taking the wrong one. Snow, his headquarters and money gone, is ruined, and soon thereafter dies, leaving Kerry to the Poor Commissioner. Kerry suspects Tod and swears to even the score. In a St. Paul office Kerry, now in manhood, and an expert woodsman, learns of the whereabouts of West. Kerry rescues a lovely girl from a scoundrel, who proves to be West. Tod threatens to pauperize the girl, Nan Downer. She thanks Kerry and tells him of the robbery, and murder of her father and of Tod's advances. She is operating a lumber tract which her father had purchased from West. Kerry makes camp. At the general store in West's Landing, he finds Tod engaged in a poker game.

CHAPTER IV—Continued

—4—

In a new game, a strange game, a man with wit watches everything. So Young watched this game. His eyes never left Tod West's hand as the man dealt but despite the fact that he detected nothing to arouse suspicion there he passed tens, back to back, and let Jim Hinkle fight it out with West. Jim lost again and, thumbing his bills, muttered savagely:

"Back where I started tonight."

Kerry stayed for the first time. He won and laughed. He had won with nines. The nine of spades, his hole card, had a bent corner. He remarked that.

West began to talk again, making an obvious attempt to resume his banter which had been soured by Young's appearance. He succeeded badly.

Tod and Hinkle clashed again; Hinkle won. A few moments later, he lost most of what he had gained. West was watching him closely, Young observed.

"Damn Mel's cigars!" said West beneath his breath, tossing his smoke away and making a wry face. "Rope! Count me out a hand," he said. "I'll run over to the house and get a real smoke."

He rose and went intently out and Young wondered. Did West so much dislike confronting him even across a poker table after what had happened that afternoon that he had fled? Or was it something else which moved him to leave?

The game went on, four-handed, and under relieved tension.

On his return to the table, the good-natured atmosphere which had prevailed for those last few hands disappeared. Again, it was a gambling contest, although Tod's talk was, outwardly, all that it had been before he knew that Kerry Young was in the room. . . . Still, that feeling of apprehension, of something afoot, grew stronger in Young's heart.

"Count Me Out a Hand," He Said.

It was West's deal. He riffled the cards twice adeptly and cut them for a third time. His fingers bent them, sent them fluttering against one another, and then two or three of the pack leaped from his clasp, slid across the table and spilled into his lap.

"Need a basket!" he growled and, shoving back his chair, stooping over, groped for cards on the floor.

He found them, all right! He found and gathered them in the hand which held the deck. But his other hand slid a second deck from beneath his belt and when he came up the one pack was thrust into the little stein shelf beneath the table top while it was the new one he thrust toward Jim Hinkle for the cut. . . .

Kerry Young did not know this. But his heart rapped smartly with suspicion.

"Cut 'em, James!" the man said. "And cut 'em deep because I've got another feeling about this hand!"

He looked about and grinned, more affable than he had been since Kerry entered the game. Hinkle cut; West beamed and . . . "slipped" the cut!

Young saw that clearly. Back to the top of the deck went the section that Hinkle had cut away and West was dealing, talking, chuckling over some joke he had made but to which Kerry gave no heed. To find Tod West playing the role of ruthless aggressor this afternoon; to find him cheating at cards tonight . . . and after all these years of suspicion and resentment!

To the tourist at Tod's left a king, next a four, to Young a seven, to Jim Hinkle a queen and to himself, a six spot.

"The king," said its possessor, "will risk a dollar."

Kerry looked at his down card. It was the nine of spades . . . and a nine of spades without a bent corner! The deck had been switched, he knew!

The man at his left came in; Kerry, thinking quickly, paused and caught a little flicker of misgiving on Tod West's face. The man wanted him in! He tossed a dollar bill to the pot.

"And a dollar!" said Jim Hinkle promptly and Tod nodded wisely.

"That queen must be proud of herself again. Queens ruined Sawyer, James. Well, I'll trail along."

The rest, also, saw the raise.

Tod set the deck on the table before him, ostentatiously, Kerry believed. He hitched his chair closer to the table and dealt, taking cards one at a time from the pack.

The showing king drew a ten spot; the four caught a nine, Young was given a deuce and beside Hinkle's queen dropped another. . . .

"Oh-oh!" muttered Tod. "You must've felt her coming,"—turning himself a king.

Excitement showed in Jim Hinkle's sallow face. Why shouldn't it? With queens back-to-back, and now a third? And two kings showing in two hands?

"Ten dollars," he said and his voice was too eager.

"Well, now, James . . . I'm just a little bit proud of what I've got. I've beaten those dam' queens once or twice tonight. I'll just tilt it a mite this time to try my luck. Let's bet twenty-five and keep the retailers out!"

The man at his left folded; the second hesitated and again Kerry caught that little flash of misgiving in West's eye. He wanted them all out now; all except Jim Hinkle who was already fingering his money, ready to call or raise.

The second tourist folded and Kerry silently shoved his cards away.

"Raisin' fifteen, Tod?" Jim asked and this time his voice was husked. "That's the way I feel. I'll back at you!"

West rubbed his chin and grinned. "By gosh," he said, as if in chagrin. "By gosh, Jimmy, you tryin' to beat me?" An onlooker laughed. "I think you're downright tryin' to take my money and that ain't quite right. . . . Back at you with twenty!"

His voice snapped on this last and the watchers crowded closer to the chair backs.

"Well, seein' as you've got so much confidence and seein' as how we've got cards comin' . . . Call!"

Three cards were dealt, now, with two showing; a pair of queens, with a lone king against them. From the top of the deck, lying so openly before him, West picked an ace and flipped it toward his adversary. For himself he turned a nine-spot.

"The queens bet twenty-five bucks!" Jim's voice was tight.

"And the king will see the twenty-five and raise ten!" said West mellowly.

Hinkle shifted his weight. He wet his lips and looked nervously at Tod's hand. Then, as if deciding on caution after a struggle, he called. His stack of bills was thin, now; the heap of currency in the center had attained considerable size.

"Now for the last heat, Jimmy. To you, m' lad, a trey, and to me,"—hesitating as he looked at the card he turned from the deck and let a smile cross his face—"to me, the king of diamonds!"

So that was it! Kerry thought to himself. Obviously, Hinkle had threes, Tod, from a cold deck, had dealt himself the case king.

West was sitting back in his chair, smiling coolly. The place had grown very still. Well over two hundred dollars had been bet so far and West was smiling at the distraught Jim Hinkle as a man will who is most sure of himself.

"Beat the kings," West said. "If you can and care to!"

Jim cleared his throat.

He counted his money slowly and said, "I'm betting fifty dollars," and as he shoved in the last of his money Young heard the breath catch in his throat.

Tod West began to laugh.

"Them queens!" he said "You boys have to learn about women from me! I beat 'em with aces once tonight. Now, it's kings. . . . Kings beat queens, Jimmy? Three? You got three of the gals?"—and Hinkle strained forward as West began turning his hole card.

"Three queens," the man said huskily.

"That's just what I figured, along at the last. So I just called, you bein' out of cash. My kings, James, catched 'emselves a triplet, too!"

Hinkle slumped back in his chair weakly. In the depths of his eyes was acute distress.

"Caught the caser!" Tod West was saying as he reached forward with both hands for the pot. "Caught the caser and—"

"Just a minute!" It was Kerry Young's voice, with snap and iron in it; and Kerry Young's hand lay in an arresting grasp on West's wrist.

"Now!"—as West Hesitated—"Face to the Wall."

Tod broke short his speech. He plunged a look hard into this stranger's face.

"Jim, how much did you lose in this pot?" Kerry asked. "You were even, you said, a while ago."

"Hunderd 'n' eighteen," said Hinkle unsteadily.

Young nodded.

"A hundred and eighteen dollars! That's too much to lose—"

"What comes off here?" West, recovering himself, shook off Kerry's hand and drew back. Color gushed darkly into his face. "What goes on here? You weren't even in this pot!"

"No. You didn't want me in."

"Makes no damn difference to me, what you do. But you were not. It's my pot. If you want to post-mortem here, whatever your name is, just string along and buy the right."

"I've the right, now!" Young's mouth twitched and he was a bit pale. "My financial interest in this pot is nothing. But I've an interest in it beside that. I've been sitting in the game and when I see a man stripped of his last dollar on a crooked deal—"

Tod was on his feet, a rush of crimson rage flooding his face, and his right hand was whipping at his breast, jerking open the shirt. Buttons gave, exposing the sweat-stained strap across his chest and the segment of shoulder holster.

It happened quickly: with such desperate quickness that Young could not hope for escape by flight. Before him was the table. To right and left were seated card players, too amazed and shocked and fuddled to be aware of what impended, let alone to be able to move quickly.

And so he did all that there remained to do.

He rose, with a swift, flowing movement. As he rose, his hand dropped into his coat pocket.

"Stop it," he snapped, and his voice was a rasp and as West's baleful eyes caught the lift of that coat, saw the rigid projection within the pocket, he added in a half whisper: "Put 'em up. Quick, or I'll . . ."

The great hand, clutching at the pistol grip in that shoulder holster, hesitated. Young's voice was imperious, his manner commanding.

"Up, now! Smartly, Tod West! . . . High. . . . Higher than that!"

Slowly West obeyed, panting as he stood there, swaying just a little; and then the rest stampeded for safety. The two stood there, facing one another across the table. West's eyes glassy, a stringer of spittle at the corner of his mouth; and Kerry Young, the stranger, hand steady in his jacket pocket, was smiling oddly.

"Next," he said, "you will turn around so I can take your toy away. You won't be harmed, but neither will I. Now!"—as West hesitated. "Face to the wall, or I may have to . . ."

Once more he left a threat unfinished. For an instant longer West held his ground and then the hand in that pocket twitched. He turned at the ominous gesture and slowly faced the wall.

Quickly, with a light tread, Young stepped close behind him. A prodding projection pressed the small of the larger man's back. Young's free hand went over the other's shoulder, inside his shirt, and dragged out the flat, ugly automatic.

From the doorway a man swore in surprise. Tod West carrying a gun? It was incredible!

"Now," the stranger was saying as he backed away, "you may do as you damned please!"

Tod chose to turn and face Young who was halted in mid room, synosure for all eyes. The hand which had covered West was still in his side pocket; that sharp, menacing projection still held firmly against the cloth. And then the hand came out, slowly, ostentatiously, dragging with it the pocket lining. The lining of the pocket and a straight-stemmed pipe!

One explosive guffaw preceded a wave of incredulous murmurs. Then these subsided as Kerry withdrew the clip from West's pistol, ejected the cartridges from the chamber and spilled the ammunition into his palm.

He dropped the pipe into his pocket and held the unloaded gun toward its owner. With a contemptuous gesture he sent the cartridges scattering across the floor, plopping and rattling in the stillness, and then he laughed, a rising, chesty laugh as West, face ashen and aglisten with sweat, dumbly accepted the weapon.

"There's your toy, Tod West," he said to the man, a-churn with chagrin, amazement and, perhaps, a species of relief, took it from his hand. "You may gather your ammunition later!"

Voices were murmuring, like the distant sound of a storm. Someone laughed, another swore and a third said:

"Damned bluff! And as for Tod's cheatin' at cards—"

Reputations die hard!

Young swept the room with his eyes.

"As for his cheating," he said evenly. "The money on the table belongs to those who had invested. You will find that the nine of spades, lying there with the money, is a perfect card. The nine of spades in the deck which was dealt the last time, has a bent corner. No one called for a new deck; no change in decks was mentioned. It is my guess that on the stein shelf before the chair occupied recently by Mr. Tod West, good citizen, may be found—"

"You rat!"

At last, West had found voice.

"You rat!" he cried again. "Other decks? . . . Course there are! You c'n find a half dozen on the stein shelf!"

But his bluster was not convincing. He had not regained his self-possession.

"Perhaps," said Kerry with a shrug. "Perhaps, West. You may be able to alibi yourself neatly, but you know and I know!"

He went slowly forward a few steps.

"Know me, West?" he asked. "Know me? Never saw me, eh? . . . Maybe, then, it'll refresh your memory to recall things.

"After I saw you steal from Jim here; after I saw you cheat a poor man for a few dollars, Tod West . . . after I saw your smallness now, I say, then I knew that I didn't take the wrong letter-file the day old Jack Snow went broke!"

Color drained from Tod's face but into his eyes came a glitter, a craft, covering and subduing the gush of insane temper such as had swept them when he reached for his gun, yonder at the card table. He did not speak at once. He may have known that this brazen youth had not convinced all who had watched of his duplicity; that a withering gesture had not wholly wrecked the place he had built for himself in this country.

"Don't you know me?" Kerry taunted when he did not speak. "Don't you remember me at all? . . . I'm Young; Kerry Young . . . And I took out the file you told me to take, that day old Jack had his death blow!"

West spoke, then, quickly.

"Young?" He shook his head. "I know no Young. . . . Wrong file? Jack Snow?" A contortion crossed his countenance. "It all means nothing to me. Who you are, what you are . . . I don't know. Except this; you're a rat!"

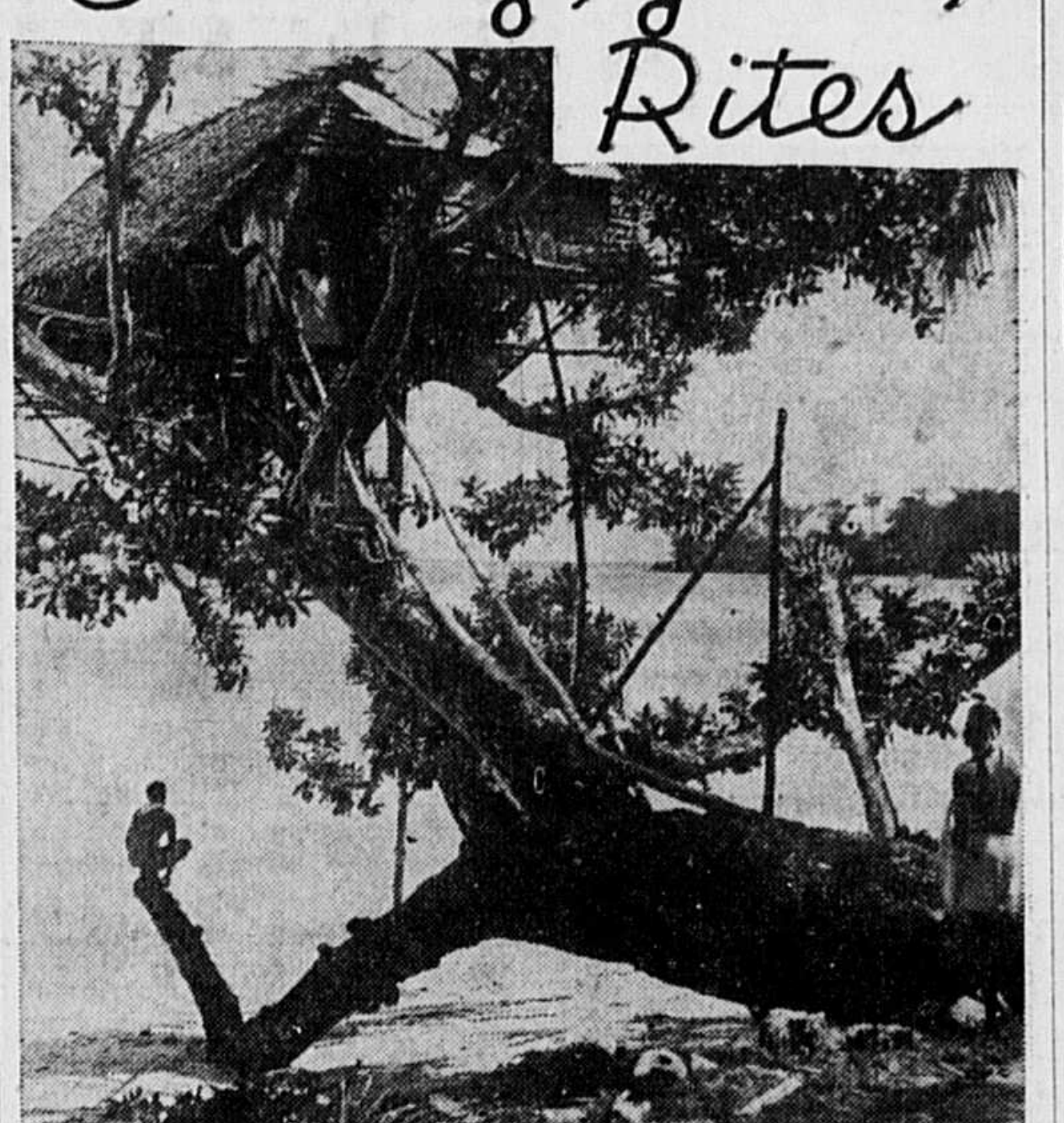
A man growled: "We're with you, Tod! You're no crook!"

Kerry shrugged.

"Fair enough," he said and smiled in triumph. "It answers the one question that's . . . bothered me. You've come a long ways, Tod West, from a thieving, burning bookkeeper. It's hard for men to think their king can do wrong, I see. But . . . step carefully, Tod West. I've sowed seed tonight; some seed always sprouts!"

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Ontong, Java, Rites



A South Sea Island Penthouse.

Prepared by National Geographic Society, Washington, D. C.—WNU Service.

CUSTOMS have changed little in some of the South Sea islands despite frequent visits of white men. On the island of Ontong Java, a native's power is based upon his wealth. The wealthy native pays higher prices than his poor neighbors.

As a daughter becomes old enough for marriage, the parents bedeck her with colored dyes. First they smear the youthful body with coconut oil and then rub on the dyes, forming gay patterns. A string of shark's teeth then is placed on her head and ornaments of turtle shell suspended from the lobes of her ears.

Holes in the two alae (the outer portions of the nostrils) and the septum of her nose are made during babyhood. Small shell ornaments hang from the septum and feathers plucked from birds adorn the nostrils and hair. Around her neck is a necklace of human hair and her belt and bracelet are of white coconut leaves. Thus adorned, and with a bright yellow skirt covering the lower portion of her body, she parades with her father and senior relatives around the village. At this time the prospective husband knows it is time for him to go to his wife. That evening he visits her in her house. For a time the young wife stays with her parents. The groom visits his wife at her parents' house but he leaves his fishing paraphernalia at his father's house. He must provide her with a certain amount of raw food and she gives him cooked food and taro.

When priests were in power, the mother, at the birth of the first-born child, went to the house of one of them to preserve both herself and the child from evil influences. She was, and still is, assisted by her mother, mother-in-law and a midwife. The husband was present until the child was actually born, but then he had to leave the house and remain away for about a year. This custom is still followed.

Two Days of Noise.

Shortly after the birth, the mother-in-law strikes a wooden pillow. This is the signal for everyone in the house to make a noise by beating on anything available. The din is kept up for 48 hours without ceasing. It is the expression of joy that a new life has been added to the community.

On this and the subsequent evening the relatives of the young mother and father assemble outside the house in semifestal dress—that is to say, oiled and adorned with sweet-smelling herbs and flowers. They sing the birth song; then march around the streets, singing at every corner. The first-born is always named for a dead priest, but subsequent children receive names of ancestors.

The young father, while he is excluded from his wife, has two holes cut in the alae of the nose, each about half an inch long. This is an extremely painful process, but most men are willing to submit to it because it is a sign that they are now fathers and therefore men of some standing.

Pieces of coconut shell are cut into rings about one inch across and one-fifth of an inch wide. A cut is made in the ring, and the two ends are forced apart by means of a small stick placed diametrically across. Four of the rings are fitted on each side of the nose and tied into place. The pieces of stick are then knocked out. The result is that the two ends of the ring bite into the flesh of the nose, and in two or three days a hole has been cut through the flesh.

The rings are left in for about ten days. They are then removed and the holes are stuffed with folded coconut leaves to prevent them from closing up. On special occasions ornaments of turtle shell are hung in the holes.

Funeral Rites.

After marriage and birth the most important customs relate to death. There are elaborate funeral rites and ceremonies, which are practically identical for both men and women.

As soon as the dying person's heart ceases to beat, the mother, wife's daughters, and other female relatives give way to long-drawn-out wails at the top of their voices. The wails never cease, except in pauses for breath, until the corpse is under ground. The louder the wails, the more the other relatives are pleased. Indeed, if the ululations are not loud enough, neighbors and villagers are noisily critical and foretell that the ghost of the dead man will be annoyed and send sickness.

Natives of Leuaniua, Ontong Java, do not conceive of any causes of illness except the supernatural. All diseases and death are caused by the evil intervention of the spirits of those already dead.

The corpse is taken into the road in front of the house and washed. It is then returned inside, the hair is cut and the body is rubbed thoroughly with coconut oil. Turtle-shell ornaments are put in the ears and, if the dead person is a man, larger specimens of these ornaments are hung from the holes in the alae of the nose. In the case of a woman, a small ornament is hung from the hole in the septum. Garlands are hung around the neck and bound on the brow.

As soon as a person is seriously ill, all his relatives are summoned to be present for these preparations. Curious neighbors peep in to criticize arrangements that are not being carried out with due decorum. After such a visit the neighbors are careful each to take a mouthful of water from bottles hung for this purpose close to the door. They spit the water into their hands and throw it over themselves to remove the contagion which contact with the corpse has laid upon them.

The sons and daughters-in-law of the dead person, be it man or woman, collect dry coconut leaves and bind them into flares, which are carried to the house where the body lies. They then put on complete festal array, decorating themselves with tumeric and garlands of leaves. The women also wear their circlets of sharks' teeth.

Ceremony of Mourning.

After the evening meal, which is taken at 7 p. m. or slightly later, the mourning ceremony begins. The corpse is laid on a new mat in the center of the house. At its feet, with their backs to it and their faces to the fire, sit the sons and daughters-in-law. It is the duty of the eldest of these to see that a flaming fire is kept burning all night, so that the whole place is brilliantly illuminated. The others sit motionless, with their fans before their faces, all through the night, without speaking.

The rest of the house is filled with the other relatives of the dead person. If he was a man of wealth and importance, as many of the villagers as can possibly squeeze in will do so and many others crowd around the doors. In a climate like that of Leuuaniua, which is only five degrees south of the Equator, a small house containing a corpse and a huge fire and packed with people and with all the normal ventilation blocked by others, the atmosphere soon becomes almost intolerable.

The relatives and friends—except the closer female relatives, who continue weeping aloud, frequently drowning the other voices—sing dirges all through the night. The latter embrace the corpse and at intervals rub it with oil. In the course of the wake the family of the dead man give tobacco to all and sundry. Almost everyone in the village will come to the wake held for a wealthy man, sure of getting a few free sticks of tobacco for a dirge.

With the dawn all save the immediate relatives depart. Preparations are then made for burial.

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