

LOWELL THOMAS' BROADCAST FOR THE LITERARY DIGEST

FRIDAY, MAY 1, 1931

INTRO

GOOD EVENING, EVERYBODY!

If today were a hundred years or so ago, of course I wouldn't be standing at a microphone -- but if I were, I would undoubtedly start out by telling of a few jovial and merry doings. Because this is May Day, and May Day used to be nothing more than a joyous festival.

In recent times the first of May has been celebrated as a sort of international labor day -- just the time for the Communists and radicals to get busy and stir things up.

And so this first set of dispatches that I have tonight is about riots, and fights, and disturbances in various parts of the globe. There has been a bit of trouble in the world

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today -- but not much. In fact less than usual.

In this country things were fairly quiet. There were radical parades and speeches, but not a great deal of rowdyism. In fact the reds spent hours today organizing a huge parade right outside my window in Madison Square. There were many red flags and banners but everybody just seemed to be having a cheery time.

Across the water, in England too it was mostly a case of oratory.

In Germany, ~~the United Press~~ tells us the day was fairly quiet, but as evening came on the trouble began. There were clashes between the Communists and the police. One police officer was seriously wounded.

In Hungary, 10 persons were hurt in a riot at Budapest.

Spain had a big but generally quiet day, sponsored by the government. Although in Barcelona there was a riot. But that's not unusual in Barcelona.

Portugal is suffering from a good deal of discontent, and naturally the police had their hands full with angry crowds.

According to the Associated Press, there were other

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disturbances all the way from France to Japan, and from India to Australia.

In Russia the Communists whooped it up with enormous parades.

The May Day news contains no mention of Italy. There are no reports of demonstrations in Venice, Rome, or Naples. Mussolini saw to that.

Things also happened at Wellesley, Massachusetts. But the affair was not Communistic. The International News Service informs us that the girls of Wellesley College held their usual May Day hoop rolling contest. Instead of roars of Bolshevik rage, there were girlish giggles, and shrieks of soprano laughter as the damsels went down the line rolling hoops.

FAMOUS DATES

Well, before going on with some more of the things that have happened on this particular May 1st, let's turn back the hands of the clock. Let's see what has happened on May 1st in other years.

I always find it very interesting, on a certain day of the month, to read of things that occurred on that same day way back in the dim and distant past.

And so today I looked up the famous events that have happened on May 1st in days gone by. I found an amazing lot of them. Just to run your eye down a list of the things that have happened on May 1st is like taking a quick look at a great panorama of extraordinary occurrences.

And every other day of the year is the same. Take any date at random and look up what happened on that day, and you'll find enough to keep your imagination going for hours. For instance I wonder how many of you were born on May 1st.

And now let's take two events that have happened on May 1st. Both are important happenings in the history of ships and the sea. They also are important

1 happenings in the history of the
2 United States.

3 On May 1st just 324 years ago--
4 ~~that is~~ ^{the ocean blue} in the year 1607--Henry ^{Wick} Hudson
5 sailed ^{on} his first adventurous voyage.
6 He was trying to find his way to China
7 via the North Pole. Well, he didn't
8 get over the top of the world, past
9 the North Pole and on to China. But
10 he made some notable discoveries in
11 the Far North, from Greenland to
12 Spitzbergen.

13 That was the beginning, and on his
14 next voyage Hudson set out in the tiny
15 but courageous craft, the Half Moon,
16 and made his memorable voyage in which
17 he sighted the mouth of a broad river,
18 with magnificent cliffs on its western
19 side. The Half Moon sailed up the
20 stream mile after mile. It was the
21 Hudson River, which the great navigator
22 was giving to civilization and the
23 white race.

24 And then let's skip down through
25 the centuries to another May 1st--not so

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very long ago -- in 1898. On that day the American fleet fought the Battle of Manila Bay. Dewey led his squadron against the ships of the Spanish, and in a few brief hours the name of Dewey was ringing around the world.

Well, those are only two of the things that have happened on May 1st, only two out of a whole long colorful and exciting list of history-making events. For example, the Battle of Chancellorsville in the Civil War was fought on May 1st - the battle that is called Lee's masterpiece - the battle in which Stonewall Jackson was killed.

But let's go on again now and take another look at the events that have happened on this May 1st, today, 1931.

1 They had a slight May Day disturbance
2 at Ashton-Under-Lyne, England. ~~And~~
3 It was all rather peculiar.

4 Sir Oswald Mosley, and his wife,
5 Lady Cynthia Mosley, the millionaire
6 couple who've gone in for radical
7 socialism, ~~had a bit of trouble. They~~
8 [^]were nearly mobbed by members of
9 England's Socialist Labor Party.

10 Sir Oswald and Lady Cynthia deserted
11 the ranks of aristocracy and became
12 members of the Labor Party. But the
13 Labor Party wasn't red and radical
14 enough to suit them, so they formed a
15 party of their own. They've been
16 putting up candidates and turning
17 British elections into a three-cornered
18 affair--between the Conservative
19 candidates, the candidates of the Labor
20 Party, and Sir Oswald's candidates.

21 And, according to the United Press,
22 that's the way it was at Ashton-Under-
23 Lyne, ^{which} ~~that is~~ ^{is} ordinarily [^]a Socialist
24 district. But now, it has elected a
25 Conservative Member of Parliament.

1 The reason is that Sir Oswald's party
2 split the Labor vote and enabled the
3 Conservative candidate to sneak in.
4 And so the Laborites are angry with
5 Sir Oswald.

6 When the result of the election
7 was announced, Sir Oswald was at the
8 Town Hall of Ashton-Under-Lyne. As
9 the figures came in, Labor Party
10 members shouted in violent protest.
11 A mob of Laborites howled in rage at
12 the young aristocrat and his wife,
13 who have gone Bolshevik. The police
14 had to interfere ^{and} ~~they~~ escorted
15 Sir Oswald and Lady Cynthia to safety.

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1 The old Mediterranean Sea is to
2 witness an impressive spectacle before
3 long. There will be warships on the
4 water and airplanes in the air. The
5 ships of the sea and the ships of the
6 sky will combine in a great war-like
7 array. ¶ No, they won't attack anybody,
8 but just the same some people don't
9 like the idea of that fighting display
10 on the blue waters and in the blue
11 skies of the Mediterranean. ¶ The
12 French government has announced a
13 series of great naval and air maneuvers
14 based on the port of Toulon. The
15 United Press informs us that in
16 diplomatic circles there is a bit of
17 worry over the idea. Shrewd observers
18 say that this is a bad time for the
19 French to hold maneuvers in the
20 Mediterranean, because at ~~the~~ present
21 the naval negotiations between France
22 and Italy seem to be in a bad way ~~and~~—
23 ~~are reported to be~~ deadlocked, in fact.
24
25

1 I don't quite know whether to say
2 this evening that the world has a new
3 dictator or not -- maybe it has and
4 maybe it hasn't.

5 The Rumanian parliament has been
6 dissolved and the question arises
7 whether King Carol is setting himself
8 up as dictator. King Carol says, NO,
9 he's ~~not~~ not. But Julio Maniu, a former
10 prime minister of Rumania, says that
11 the King is trying to make himself
12 another Mussolini.

13 Meanwhile, the romantic, gallivant-
14 ing Carol has had a ^{dramatic} face-to-face meeting
15 with his wife, Queen Helen. They
16 haven't been on speaking terms. ~~yet~~
17 ^{But} they met ^{today} at the sickbed of their son,
18 Michael, the boy who was King but ^{who} is
19 now only ~~the~~ Crown Prince.

20 Both the King and the Queen went to
21 see their son, and one was there when
22 the other arrived. The New York Evening
23 Post informs us that the royal couple who
24 ~~have~~ ^{have} found domestic life so stormy just
25 gave each other cold glances -- you know,
these icy stares.

1 ~~The~~ Fighting is still going on
2 in South Atlantic waters.

3 An Associated Press dispatch states
4 that the Portuguese cruiser, Vasco
5 ~~de Gama~~ De Gama, has been standing offshore
6 ~~and~~ bombarding the western end of *the island*
7 *Madeira* with heavy shellfire.

8 Dispatches from Lisbon tell us
9 that the troops of the Portuguese
10 government are driving the rebels back
11 into the city of Funchal, and one-third
12 of the island is in control of the
13 Lisbon authorities.

14 On the other hand, it's pointed
15 out that the city itself is ~~very~~
16 strongly situated and ~~it~~ has been well
17 fortified. It's a powerful fort, and
18 may ~~be~~ be hard to capture.

1 I was just leaving the offices of
2 the Literary Digest on my way to the
3 broadcasting studio, when a messenger
4 ^{handed me} ~~brought~~ a telegram. It was from ~~the~~ a
5 well-known aviator, Lieutenant Robert
6 S. Fogg. I ^{saw} ~~met~~ Bob Fogg last week
7 when I was up in New England. He's
8 one of the best fliers in the country,
9 and just now is the ace of New England
10 aviation. They've got a great layout
11 of sky routes in New England, and
12 Lieutenant ^{Bob} Fogg is the president of an
13 up and coming New Hampshire air service.

14 Well, that telegram from ^{Bob} Fogg
15 read as follows:

16 "HOW ABOUT THE RETURN OF THOSE
17 AVIATORS IN BRAZIL ^{for} ~~as~~ YOUR NEWS ITEM
18 OF THE DAY?"

19 ~~All~~ Right, ^{Bob} anything to please ~~the~~ you!
20 ~~Lieutenant~~

* * * * *

21 An amazing bit of tragic irony
22 comes in the return to civilization--
23 almost a return to the land of the
24 living--of two aviators who were lost
25 in the tropical jungles of Brazil.

1 The morning papers told the main facts.

2 The Italian aviator, Count
3 Di Robilant, and a mechanic were flying
4 from Sao Paulo, in Brazil, across the
5 South American continent to Lapaz,^{high up} in
6 the mountains of Bolivia. They ran
7 out of gas and were forced to land in
8 the deepest wilderness of the Amazon
9 jungle. They were lost for 18 days,
10 struggling their way back to civilization.

11 A steamship^{crew} on a Brazilian river
12 saw two ragged figures on the bank,
13 beckoning frantically. These^{turned out to be} ~~were~~ the
14 two lost fliers. The mechanic was
15 injured during the landing and is in
16 a serious condition. ~~Count Robilant~~
17 ~~himself is ill from the loss of blood,~~
18 ~~which came about as he struggled through~~
19 ~~the tangled jungles and thorny thickets.~~

20 But here's the ironical part of it.
21 Help was constantly near the two
22 desperate, struggling men, only a few
23 hundred feet away. They knew it. Day
24 after day they could hear rescuers.
25 ~~looking for them.~~ But they couldn't

1 communicate with them.

2 The International News Service
3 tells us that when Count Robilant's
4 plane disappeared, a number of airplanes
5 went scouting for the ^{lost} ~~two~~ men. The
6 planes sighted the wreck of Robilant's
7 machine. But the two men already had
8 left it.

9 Day after day the planes hunted
10 for them, flying low over the jungle.
11 As they toiled along in the dense
12 shadow of the tropical forest, the two
13 men could hear the roar of the motors
14 over their ^{only a few hundred feet away,} heads, and they knew that
15 ~~rescuers~~ rescuers were just above the
16 trees.

17 But they couldn't signal. The
18 trees were too thick overhead, the
19 dense blanket of the jungle engulfed
20 and hid them. They tried to find an
21 open space ~~where~~ where they might be
22 seen, but the ^{that green prison,} jungle covered everything
23 for hundreds of miles.

24 And so, with the airplanes circling
25 over the trees above them, and with the
roar of the motors in their ears, they
struggled on--until they came to the
banks of the river and sighted the steamer.

3

1 I have an apology to make, and it's
2 an apology that a lot of you folks
3 ought to make too. Many a time I've
4 growled about the traffic and said
5 driving a car would be okay, if it
6 weren't for the traffic. Most of us
7 have said the same thing. But now
8 we're told that we ought to bless
9 the traffic.

10 Frederick C. Russell, an authority
11 on automobile ^{affairs} ~~traffic~~, tells us, in
12 a copyrighted article for the Russell
13 Service, that without traffic many
14 automobile owners might not be able
15 to drive their cars. And that accidents
16 might be more numerous than they are.

17 Well, that sounds like an odd idea.
18 But it turns out to be quite sensible
19 when you read about it. This week's
20 Literary Digest prints an article ^{on}
21 ~~about~~ how traffic helps the average
22 driver.

23 The Digest tells us some curious
24 experiences which drivers have had in
25 and out of ^{those endless processions of weaving cars,} ~~the traffic~~. And it comes

1 to the quite reasonable conclusion
2 that traffic acts as a guide for many
3 drivers. They just follow the car
4 ahead. It's just a part of the old,
5 sound theory that unless you are an
6 expert, you can often do better by
7 following--by being led, than by
8 going your own way independently.

9 If you have any doubts about it
10 just have a look at your new Digest
11 and read the rest of the article.

(2)

1 No, it wasn't any presidential
2 election that took place today, even
3 though Herbert Hoover and Alfred E.
4 Smith were the principal characters.
5 It was the official opening of the
6 ~~biggest~~ ^{tallest} building in the world, the
7 Empire State Building in New York City.
8 They ~~started the big building going a~~ ^{opened the doors of the towering skyscraper a}
9 little before noon today.

10 In Washington President Hoover
11 touched a key which threw open an
12 electric circuit ~~and~~ ^{that} lighted the lights
13 in the giant structure. ~~At the~~ ^{At the} New York ~~end~~
14 ex-Governor Smith was the Master of
15 Ceremonies. He is the head of the
16 corporation that has built the immense
17 tower. In a sense, that dizzy spire
18 that pierces the Manhattan sky is his
19 own pet hobby. Among the speakers
20 who lent their eloquence to the
21 occasion were Governor Roosevelt of
22 New York and Mayor Jimmie Walker.

23 At the Fifth Avenue entrance of
24 the building two children, a grandson
25 and a granddaughter of ex-Governor

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Smith, took their post at a silk barrier across the main entrance. The two children cut the strang of silk, ex-Governor Smith unlocked the door with a silver key, and that officially opened the tallest building in the world. And it's one of the most beautiful in the world too.

The United Press reminds us that the Empire State Building towers 1,250 feet above the pavements - nearly a quarter of a mile high. It has 86 floors and will house 25,000 tenants.

Can you imagine what the streets around the building will look like during the noon hour.

1 Here's a short item, or at least
2 it ought to be short.

3 ~~I have~~ ^{has just come in} a letter ~~here~~ from Neil
4 H. Tasker of Shamokin, Pennsylvania. He
5 writes - "You're wrong, sir, all wrong.
6 Every night you make the same mistake.
7 You say 'So long until tomorrow.' If
8 you said So long until next year or so
9 long until 1950, it would be all right,
10 but in this swift moving age tomorrow
11 is not a long way off. You ought to
12 say 'So short until tomorrow.'"

13 Well, that's what Neil Tasker
14 writes and as he says, this is a swift
15 moving world - especially at Shamokin,
16 Pennsylvania.

17 So for tonight I think I'll follow
18 his advice and say - So short until
19 tomorrow.
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