

LOWELL THOMAS BROADCAST FOR THE LITERARY DIGEST

FRIDAY, AUGUST 28, 1931

INTRO

GOOD EVENING, EVERYBODY:

Well, Amos and Andy ought to be interested in this first bit of news. Their old station out in Chicago, WMAQ, changed hands today -- that is, it partly changed hands. WMAQ has been the property of the Chicago Daily News, but today that big and important daily went into partnership on matters radio with the National Broadcasting Company. That is, it's a partnership so far as WMAQ is concerned, ownership jointly by the News and NBC. The direction of the WMAQ will be in the hands of the NBC. The new policy will be to use the regular Chicago broadcasts plus NBC features.

Yes, Amos and Andy ought to be interested in that, because WMAQ was the starting place for those two immortal names. It was at that station, which is one of the pioneer stations of the Middle West that Amos and Andy started out. They had been on the air before, but under different names. They went over to WMAQ and began the famous partnership of the shrewd, humorous Amos and the big-talking Andy which soon swept the country.

EARTHQUAKE

1 A series of violent earthquakes ^{were} ~~were~~
2 reported from the wild borders of India
3 and Afghanistan. The city of Quetta, the
4 military capital of Baluchistan, was
5 badly shaken. ~~The~~ Shocks were felt ^{for} ~~in~~
6 400 miles along that mountainous,
7 barbaric stretch of border-land. One
8 whole town called Sharigh is said to have
9 disappeared completely. It just seems to
10 have been swallowed up by the earth.
11 The United Press reports that telegraph
12 and railway communication has been
13 disrupted.

14 Several years ago I traveled through
15 that forbidding craggy region of border-
16 land with its wild tribes. The country
17 was terrifying enough in its natural
18 state, without having the added terror
19 of earthquakes. ~~like that.~~ But then it's
20 a region of earthquakes.
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1 A bit of news both fantastic and
2 dreadfully grim, comes from Burma, the
3 land of ~~pag~~ pagodas, ^{and tinkling temple bells.} It tells us that
4 Saya San, who was called the Golden
5 Crow, the leader of the Burmese rebels,
6 has been sentenced to death by a British
7 tribunal. ~~Saya San~~, The Golden Crow,
8 was a principal figure in the ~~XXXXXX~~
9 Burmese rebellion that broke out and
10 was suppressed months ago, and he was a
11 weird figure. He posed as a holy man and
12 said he had miraculous powers. He
13 assured ^{his followers} ~~them~~ that by using magical
14 spells he could make them immune from
15 the bullets of the British. He declared
16 that he ^{himself was entirely} ~~was~~ immune, ~~He assured his~~
17 ~~followers~~ ^{and} that ~~the~~ British weapons were
18 powerless against him. The white man
19 could never kill him.

20 And the Burmese natives, as the
21 United Press reminds us, believed in his
22 supernatural powers. They followed him
23 in wild fights with the British soldiers.
24 Hundreds of them were killed, and Saya
25 San, the Golden Crow, the miraculous

1 holy man, was captured.

2 Well, he'll have a chance to
3 prove his miraculous powers now. He'll
4 have a tragical opportunity to prove
5 that the British ~~XXXX~~ can't kill him.

6 The British court has sentenced
7 him to death for inciting the revolt.

8 And another dark drama
9 of the orient approaches its close.

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1 A denial comes from London. No,
2 Prime Minister MacDonald is not going to
3 retire from politics. At least he says
4 he isn't.

5 The rumor, as ^{transmitted out} ~~sent along~~ by the
6 Associated Press, was that after the
7 present cooperative government in
8 London had completed its work and a
9 general election ^{came along,} ~~was held,~~ Prime Minister
10 MacDonald would not appear before the
11 voters and ask for reelection to
12 Parliament.

13 ~~The reason for the supposition~~
14 ^{Ramsay} ~~was that~~ MacDonald has apparently been
15 ejected from his own party, the Labor
16 Party. Today, as related by the United
17 Press, the Labor leaders of Great
18 Britain deposed the Prime Minister as
19 their leader. They voted him out and
20 they voted Arthur Henderson in. Henderson
21 ^{MacDonald's} was Foreign Minister in the Labor
22 Government and he broke with the Prime
23 Minister on the subject of the plan for
24 economy which the Cooperative
25 Government is ^{now} putting into effect.

1 At the same time the leaders of
2 the Labor Party voted solidly against
3 that economy plan.

4 Well, with his own party turning
5 against him, the rumor ^{naturally was} ~~came along~~ that
6 Prime Minister ^{Ramsay} ~~MacDonald~~ had decided
7 to drop out of politics. But now he
8 declares that he hasn't come to any
9 such decision at all.

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LOAN

1 Last night we had word about a
2 big loan to England. Well, that ~~final~~ ^{financial}
3 ~~financial~~ transaction seems to be
4 developing. The International News
5 Service has a cable from Paris ~~that~~
6 states ^{ing} ~~es~~ that French and American financial
7 interests have got ^{ten} together and are
8 lending 400 million dollars to the Bank
9 of England. The loan is to run for
10 one year, and the money is being put up
11 equally by the French and the Americans.
12 Each side is slapping 200 million
13 dollars on the table, while John Bull
14 picks it up and stuffs it into his
15 pocket and says, "Thanks boys, ^{and cheerio,} I'll see
16 you a year from now."
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NAPOLEON

In the quaint old walled city of Avignon, in the south of France, is an old-time actress, famous in her day, on whom the French government has now pinned the Legion of Honor. She is Madam Vorns-Baretta. She strutted the stage for many a year and was a favorite at the famous Comedie Francaise. And now she has been rewarded with the glamorous decoration created by the great Napoleon. And that seems doubly appropriate, because in the family of the actress they still have an unpaid bill incurred by Napoleon.

The amount of the bill is given by the International News Service as 60 francs. It was for food and wine which Napoleon bought and never paid for, and 60 francs bought a lot of omelet, ragout, and vin rouge ordinaire or extra-ordinaire in those old days of more than 130 years ago.

Hippolyte Baretta, the grandfather of the actress, was the keeper of a tavern in the city of Popes, the high walled city of Avignon. Napoleon

1 was then a young and obscure artillery
2 officer. He was on his way to the
3 Seige of Toulon, where he performed so
4 brilliantly against the British that he
5 laid the foundation of that magical
6 reputation that was later to make him
7 Emperor of France, master of Europe, and
8 hero of the age. He passed through
9 Avignon and stopped at the tavern of
10 Hippolyte Baretta ~~to have~~^{to} dinner.

11 Napoleon was a skinny, hungry
12 youth in those days, but just the same
13 he wasn't likely to have eaten and drunk
14 60 francs worth. But he was full of big
15 ideas, and he didn't mind telling the
16 world just what was what.

17 In the tavern of Avignon he began to
18 explain his political ideas to the boys
19 who were hanging around. There was a
20 grand argument. Then the young Napoleon
21 invited several sympathetic listeners to
22 have dinner with him. He treated them to
23 the best in the place. They ate and
24 drank heartily. And all the time he
25 told them what was wrong with France and

1 what was wrong with the world, and how he
 2 would run things. It was a noble and
 3 inspiring occasion, but when it was all
 4 over along came the inevitable, that sad
 5 event to which all good times lead -- the
 6 bill, *the checks, la addition, the sad news.*

7 Hippolyte added up the figures and
 8 presented the fiery young Bonaparte with
 9 a bill for 60 francs. And the man who
 10 was to become the master ~~of~~ of the world
 11 fished into his wallet. It was the same
 12 old story, the sad old story -- he didn't
 13 have any money.

14 Ah yes, it was too bad. Monsieur,
 15 the inn-keeper, would understand. The
 16 paymaster of the Republic was a scoundrel,
 17 he was always late; Lieutenant Bonaparte
 18 had pay coming to him, but he hadn't been
 19 able to collect it yet. Would the good
 20 inn-keeper be kind enough to wait until
 21 the paymaster had done his duty, and
 22 Lieutenant Bonaparte would send him the 60
 23 francs.

24 Yes, Hippolyte ~~said~~ Baretta, the
 25 inn-keeper, said he would wait. I guess

1 that was about all he could say.

2 And Bonaparte went on to the
3 Seige of Toulon. He didn't know it, but
4 he was on his way to an imperial crown.

5 But, he forgot all about those 60
6 francs. In the hurly-burly of battle and
7 the affairs of state, Napoleon forgot ~~all~~
8 ~~about~~ that small debt. And the inn-keeper
9 thought it would be perhaps not in the best
10 of taste to present a bill to the man who
11 was conquering ~~the~~ Europe. He kept the
12 slip of paper with the figures on it as
13 a memento.

14 And so I suppose it's only a bit of
15 poetic justice that now his granddaughter
16 has been granted the famous decoration
17 that Napoleon created, the Legion of
18 Honor.

1 A bomb went off today in the
2 Portugese embassy at Madrid. The
3 Portugese ambassador to Spain was
4 sitting, ~~and~~ dictating to his secretary
5 when something came flying through the
6 window and hit the floor. And that
7 something was a big bomb.

8 Well, suppose that you and I were
9 sitting pleasantly and quietly and a
10 bomb came flying into the room. What
11 would we do? Well, we'd do exactly what
12 the Portugese ambassador and his
13 secretary did -- they took one long
14 jump, that is, one long jump each, and
15 went diving out the door. They were
16 still on their way down the hall when
17 the bomb went off with a terrific bang,
18 and wrecked the room.

19 The International News Service
20 dispatch says that nobody was hurt, but
21 the damage was plenty.
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1 The strike of motion picture
2 operators in Chicago seems to be ~~getting~~ ^{going from}
3 ~~worse and~~ ^{bad to} worse. Three moving theatres
4 were bombed last night. In each case ~~the~~ ^{the}
5 ~~a~~ charge of explosive ^{that} went off ~~and~~
6 shook ^{the} whole neighborhoods. Window panes
7 were knocked out in nearby houses ^{and} ~~the~~
8 damage to the theatres amounts to
9 thousands of dollars.

10 The Associated Press reminds
11 us that the cause of the dispute, ~~between~~
12 the motion picture house-owners and the
13 Union, ~~centers~~ ^{centers} around the Union rule that
14 each house must employ two operators.
15 Owners of small movie theatres declare
16 they can't do it. They say that the
17 wages of the second man represents
18 their margin of profit and that one man
19 is enough.

20 Well, the result of the
21 dispute is the present strike which
22 is creating a good deal of excitement
23 in the windy city.

24 And in St. Louis too there
25 was a bombing. ~~xxx~~ An infernal machine

1 was thrown from a motor car and went
2 off in front of a cigar store. A hole
3 was torn in the sidewalk and a hundred
4 windows along the street were shattered.
5 One man was injured by flying glass.
6 No reason is given for the bombing.

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9 The annual cold water swimming
10 marathon for women took place
11 this afternoon at Toronto, Canada,
12 in connection with the Canadian
13 National Exhibition. The girls swam
14 for ten miles in Lake Ontario and
15 the water was unusually rough.

16 Margaret Ravison of Phila.
17 came in first. Ethel McGarry of
18 ~~W~~ N.Y. who finished third, ~~was~~
19 was informed that as her prize
20 she now becomes Ass. Dir. of
21 Life Saving for the Amer. Red
22 Cross under Captain Scully, the
23 famous life saver.

24 35 girls started. But less
25 than a third of them finished.

1 In New York, Governor ^{Franklin D.} Roosevelt
2 handed the legislature a proposal to
3 raise 20 million dollars for unemploy-
4 ment relief. He wants to use the money
5 to finance public works, which would
6 provide employment for from 600,000 to a
7 million workers.

8 The United Press in giving the
9 facts adds that the idea is to raise
10 the money by ^{increasing} ~~raising~~ the state income-
11 tax 50 per cent.

12 And while we're on the subject of
13 the economic situation, let's get in a
14 light touch. Eddie Cantor, the stage
15 funny-man, is yelling ~~out~~ "Yoo-Hoo,
16 Prosperity" at the top of his voice, and
17 he has a 5-year plan of his own.

18 Among other solemn bits of
19 economic analysis, ^{the owl-eyed Eddie} ~~he~~ [^] points out some
20 of the difficulties we would have ~~to~~ ^{ing} in
21 apply ^{ing} Russian communism to the United
22 States.

23 "Dividing up everything equally,"
24 he declares, "would not work in this
25 country. At least it wouldn't work out

1 among the rich -- because they ^{rich} haven't
2 got anything left to divide."

3 ~~XXXXXXXX~~ He gives us among other
4 economic ~~statistics~~ ^{figures} the fact that John D.
5 Rockefeller has called back the dimes
6 he gave away last year -- both of them.

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7 Eddie is a real pessimist. He
8 observes gloomily that people are going
9 to miss the depression when it's gone --
10 they won't know what to do without it
11 when they haven't got it any more. Yes,
12 that's a sad thought, Eddie, but we'll
13 bear up bravely and do our best. When
14 the Eddie Cantor ^{is} 5-Year Plan sends Old
15 Man Depression chasing out the door,
16 why we might ~~long~~ ^{yearn} to have the miserable
17 old fellow back, but we'll smile bravely
18 through our tears.

1 I have a fascinating little story
2 here about adventurous Christian
3 missionaries whom you'll find most
4 unexpectedly in the wildest places in
5 the world. It's in this week's issue
6 of the Literary Digest, and the story
7 is told by my old friend Carveth Wells,
8 the man who climbed the Mountains of the
9 Moon in Africa.

10 Just before I came to the
11 microphone, ~~here~~, I happened to be
12 skimming through my copy of the Literary
13 Digest, and one thought struck me. I
14 have a natural inclination for tales of
15 adventure in strange places, of out-
16 landish peoples, and the curious ways
17 of animals. The Literary Digest gives
18 us plenty of that, ~~along with its news summary and other features.~~ In every issue
19 you'll find a collection of compact
20 thrilling stories -- like this one in
21 which Carveth Wells tells us about the
22 missionary heroes and heroines of the
23 wilds.

24 But just the same the Literary
25 Digest fulfills its main object of

1 giving us an authoritative and easily-
2 understood summing up of the important
3 questions in the news of the day and in
4 the affairs of the world. For example,
5 take this week's issue.

6 It starts out with an article on
7 the use of military force in the oil
8 fields of Texas and Oklahoma. The ques-
9 tion of oil is one of immense significance.
10 And there you have it put clearly in
11 that Digest article.

12 Then there's an analysis of the
13 present state of that remarkable racial
14 movement, the drifting of the American
15 negroes to the North.

16 And why all that shooting down in
17 Cuba? That's the subject of another
18 Digest article.

19 Then an outline of the crisis in
20 the coal industry -- an interesting
21 theory about the causes of the crime
22 situation -- military experiments with
23 poison gas -- a personality sketch of the
24 Judge who convicted Legs Diamond. Next
25 comes the Topics-in-Brief page, with

1 those bits of humorous comment on every
2 possible subject of the day.

3 In the section devoted to foreign
4 comment there is a summing up of the
5 present status of the German reparations
6 problem, and then international affairs,
7 combined with the romance and adventure
8 of strange places -- that is, there's an
9 article about Transjordan, the land
10 of eternal warfare, ~~and~~ next door to
11 Palestine. Also a sketch of that
12 fascinating personality the German
13 Chancellor von Bruening, followed by an
14 outline of the immigration situation all
15 over the world.

16 Then there's the Letters and Art
17 section, with theatrical information,
18 motion picture news, pictures, books, *and so on.*

19 The section of Religion and Social
20 Service in the Literary Digest goes all
21 over the world for the latest facts on
22 religious matters.

23 The poetry page, the section of
24 Science and Invention, the financial
25 section, and the page devoted to the

1 Spice of Life -- these cater to minds of
2 all types.

3 And then, of course, there are
4 those tales of outlandish places and
5 stories of adventure.

6 But wait a minute here -- I was
7 going to tell those tales of missionaries
8 in far places which Carveth Wells relates
9 -- but here I've been getting enthusiastic
10 about the Literary Digest in general, and
11 it's been eating up time, just devouring
12 those seconds that go ticking off, no
13 matter what we want and no matter what we
14 do. I'm afraid we'll have to let those
15 far-journeying missionaries go until the
16 next time, because ~~I'd better get along~~
17 ~~with the news.~~ *there's just time to say*
18 *so long until tomorrow.*
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