

P.J. - Sunoco. Wed., Nov. 14, 1934

INTRO.

It seems that I accidentally said a wise thing last night - that today might be a good time to concentrate on the whims and oddities of the news. There are plenty of them.

For example, I got a letter this morning which reminded me that I said last night that this is fur week. The ~~letter~~ letter takes exception and insists that this is actually cheese week. So it's a war between the fur and the cheese, between ermine and gorgonzola, between silver fox and limburger.

## COLLISION

In this streamlined world, there is streamlined gas - also streamlined collisions. It happened to one of those dizzy, dashing, streamlined trains, the Zephyr of the ~~East~~ Burlington Railroad. The Zephyr was whizzing across the Nebraska plains, when the collision occurred. A lumbering old farm truck ran smack into the side of that flashing, ultra-modern wonder of speed on rails. Nobody killed, and not much damage.

The casualties were much more serious when two horses collided in California, race horses on a California track. A jockey was out exercising a thoroughbred. Suddenly, from one of the stalls, another race horse broke loose and started a mad gallop around the track. The horse being exercised by the jockey and the horse on the run away made a headlong collision. Both animals were killed, and the jockey is in the hospital.

PICTURE

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If somebody told you about a horse in the parlor, you'd think it was some kind of cockeyed tall story. But it's a serious, high-falutin' matter of highbrow art. And the freakish story is embodied in one of the famous paintings at the National Fine Arts Exhibition at Rockefeller Center. The masterpiece is by John E. Ferneley, a renowned painter of horses and horsemen in the early part of the last century. It is a hunting scene. When it was painted, the horse ~~was actually brought into~~ <sup>posed in</sup> the drawing room. Carl Freund, Program Director at the Rockefeller Center Exhibit, tells me that the reason was - the bailiffs were after the artist, to clap him in jail for debt.

He was at the country house of Squire Freer of Enderby, a great huntsman. He was safe in the house but did not dare to go out. So the Squire, wanting a ~~drawing~~ <sup>portrait</sup> of himself and his favorite thoroughbred, had the horse brought into the drawing room, and there, amid the elegance of a fashionable ~~drawing room~~ <sup>English country house</sup>, the horse and the Squire posed, and the painter painted.

KIDNAP

There's one bit of news tonight without levity or any light touch, only bitter, evil tragedy. The child's body found buried in a shallow Tennessee grave ~~xx~~ has been definitely identified as that of Dorothy Ann Distelhurst, the <sup>little girl.</sup> ~~missing child~~ missing. An intensive kidnap hunt has been underway, but now it's over, with the dark realization of the worst fears.

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The little kindergarten girl of Nashville, Tennessee, disappeared nearly two months ago, and since then her parents have made frantic efforts to get her back. Her father was eager to pay a ransom. He came to New York, hoping to make contacts ~~with the supposed kidnapers~~ with the supposed kidnapers in the Metropolis.

Yesterday two negro workmen found a child's body buried in a shallow grave. It was hard to make an identification but now they say the identification is certain

RELIEF

Activity ~~certainly~~ is buzzing in Washington. The biggest White House move in some time is the formation of a Committee to coordinate all government loans. Every federal lending agency will be supervised and harmonized. The President has named Henry Morgenthau, Jr., Secretary of the Treasury, to be the Chairman of the new Committee that stands <sup>supreme</sup> ~~free to decree~~ over all the loans the Government makes to its citizens. Political observers believe that this is merely the first move to coordinate all federal relief agencies, and bring relief in all its phases under one <sup>central</sup> ~~simple~~ control. This in preparation for the next big drive toward recovery.

President Roosevelt is working long, laborious hours, meeting cabinet members, heads of relief departments, and leaders of American business and labor. More than a hundred different officials treked to the White House during the long presidential working day.

President Green of the American Federa<sup>tion</sup> of Labor was in conference today with Labor Department officials. He is pushing a proposal to have capital and industry pay for unemployment

insurance. Business leaders are passing around the word - cooperation; work with the President.

This hum of White House activity is all preparing the way for the President's plan for winter relief, which he will announce on the radio in December - yes, and preparing the way for the new session of Congress. The Administration wants to avoid disputes, labor troubles, strikes and long congressional wranglings when the law-makers meet.

FIGHT

The world's worst boxer is about to defend his championship, Slapsie Maxie Rosenbloom, the light heavyweight champ. Fight fans will go to Madison Square Garden on fight night to see just how bad he is. He's the world's worst fight<sup>er, yet a</sup> champion. He can't fight, but nobody can lick him. He is so bad that he has eared<sup>n</sup> a quarter of a million dollars in the prize ring. He hasn't got a cent. He has an automobile, but the chauffeur owns it, has taken over the ownership instead of wages. The chauffeur owns the car, but he still wears livery, calls the champ "boss" and drives him around. Slapsie Maxie doesn't drink, smoke, chew or train. He spends his time in night clubs, and does songs and dances for the entertainment of the customers.

Risler

SLEEP

There's an American insomnia champion in New Hampshire who goes a year at a time without sleep. The English insomnia champion hasn't slept for five whole years. His name is Mr. Best and he comes from a quiet little village in Middlesex, so quiet that even an insomnia champ should <sup>easily fall a</sup> ~~fall off to~~ sleep. But not Mr. Best, though he goes to bed every night. He puts on his pajamas, crawls under the covers, but never puts out the light. He reads detective stories till morning.

Five years ago, while on a motorcycle, he bumped into a truck, and it knocked the drowsiness right out of him. He hasn't been asleep since.

"The doctors often tell me", says Mr. Best, "that I should have died years ago, but apart from not sleeping, I am perfectly all right."

And he looks it. Think of all the detective stories he has been able to read. "Sleep may be good, but insomnia is better", says Mr. Best.



Ripley

Nov. 14, 1934.

RIPLEY AND L.T.

L.T.: I'll bet that along about now you must be saying, Ripley should be here, because those "Believe It or Not" oddities are right up his alley. Well, <sup>Bob</sup> Ripley is here, believe it or not. I asked him to come along to the studio with me to chime in with a few items out of his inimitable collection of things hard to believe <sup>but</sup> that are quite true. What strange prodigies of the news have you got to tell about tonight Rip? And make them newsy.

RIPLEY: I will. They are about newspapers. Take the ~~one~~ *easiest newspaper in the world to read,* ~~that was the easiest to read~~ It was a newspaper called "Le Silence" published in Paris from 1870 to 1875. All the pages were blank, absolutely blank. It was published for those who preferred quiet meditation when they read the paper and didn't like the blatant outpouring of the modern press.

L.T.: Seems quite an idea -- a newspaper with blank pages. It suggests a radio broadcast without sound, ~~although~~ <sup>and</sup> that might be a good idea too. *But let's keep mum about that.*

RIPLEY: The largest paper ever printed was seen around New York

at the time of the Civil War. It was called the "Illuminated Quadruple <sup>n</sup>Costellation" and was as big as its name. The pages were six feet wide and eight and a half feet high, ~~with~~ ~~thirteen wide columns on each page.~~

L.T.: That sure would be the paper to read in the subway at rush hour.

RIPLEY: There's a newspaper in Switzerland called "Die Flitterwoche" which means "Honeymoon Week". It's published for honeymooners only, and it has been going ever since 1923.

L.T.: Haven't honeymooners got anything else to do <sup>but</sup> ~~that~~ read the papers? Not in Switzerland apparently, although you'd think they'd look at the scenery once in a while.

RIPLEY: The newspaper with the smallest circulation in the world is in Vienna, published for over three hundred years with only three copies a day. The oldest paper ~~is~~ in Peking, China, 1,023 years old. It was founded in <sup>A.D.</sup> ~~18~~ 911 and has been published continually ever since. 800 of its editors have been assassinated.

L.T.: <sup>Rip,</sup>  
^ Those certainly are some queer facts about newspapers.

Which do you think is the most curious newspaper of all?

RIPLEY: I would give the "Believe It or Not" prize to the only paper in Tibet. It's called "The Mirror of the New Vicissitudes of Every Corner of This Universe" <sup>(L.T. Some name!)</sup> And it has a motto. The motto is "Down with wheels. <sup>That's the motto.</sup> The invention of wheels has caused all the trouble in the world." <sup>^</sup> The Tibetan ~~the~~ editorial policy maintains <sup>that</sup> ~~that~~ <sup>flourished</sup> the Golden Age <sup>^</sup> when there were human carriers only -- before wheeled carts or wagons were thought of.

CLUB

Well Rip, the next time you're in London, you certainly ought to join the London Explorers Club. I know ~~you~~ <sup>you've</sup> ~~trot~~ <sup>ted</sup> around the odd places of the six continents quite a bit, but that isn't the point. The London Explorers Club goes exploring for odd ~~and of instance~~ ~~incidents~~ instances and funny phenomena in England. For example, they have found a two hundred year old hospital <sup>that has</sup> ~~that's~~ never had a patient. As soon as it was built, it was turned into a home for old folks. And in London the explorers have discovered three houses with windows, window shades, flower boxes and neatly swept stoops. But the doors don't open and those houses have no rooms. They are dummy houses, just fronts. They were put up to fill some vacant lots that spoiled the effect of a long row of bungalows. *How's that for a goofy idea?*

And there is the case of the boy who went to sea many years ago, and ~~he~~ said: "Mother, have a hot cross bun waiting for me when I get back." And when the time came she had a hot cross bun waiting.

*But he didn't return.*

She always kept a hot cross bun waiting to the end of her life, but he never returned. She died fifty years ago, but still there is a hot cross bun. The village bakes one every year, an annual ceremony, in memory of the Mother's faith that never waned.

SUNOCO

Some kind listener-in sends me a clipping from the Washington, Pennsylvania Reporter. It's a tall story come true, an actual real life version of the kind of a whopper about what happened when somebody drank some Blue Sunoco.

The Washington, Pennsylvania Reporter tells how George Morgan of Oakdale, Pennsylvania, was driving with a friend, and they landed their car in a ditch. They were arrested for driving while intoxicated and hauled before Judge Hughes, to whom George explained that he made a mistake and got a hold of a bottle of Blue Sunoco that his friend had. He took a good swig of it and the next thing he knew he was in the ditch.

Which points to the moral that streamlined gas ~~belongs~~<sup>works</sup>  
~~inside of~~ the gas tank, ~~and not inside of~~ <sup>but not in</sup> the human tank.

VANDERBILT

The sensational Vanderbilt case came to a peculiar turn today -- quite in keeping with all these oddities of the news. The report came out that the decision of the court would take Gloria Vanderbilt out of the custody of her mother and give the girl to the care of her aunt, Mrs. Harry Payne Whitney. And it is supposed ~~that~~ this is likely to happen, although the case proceeded to get thoroughly obfuscated.

Justice Carew issued the following statement: "Gloria Vanderbilt is not to have, for the future, the life she has had from the death of her father up to June 1932." <sup>Hence the</sup> ~~The natural~~ inference, ~~of course, was~~ that the girl would be taken from the custody of her mother and given to her aunt. Now the Judge has announced that he ~~had~~ issued the statement to mystify the press. And ~~that~~ certainly does mystify. He refuses to say what his decision is.

It is quite a mystifying climax <sup>to</sup> ~~and~~ a most mystifying case. The court battle <sup>was</sup> ~~are~~ shrouded in secrecy, behind closed doors. It has been one of those bitter family battles, with

such a grimy washing of linen that the Judge declared the testimony unfit for publication.

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Gloria Vanderbilt is the heiress to two million dollars left to her by her father, Reginald Vanderbilt. And her mother, left a young and beautiful widow, led a fashionable life in New York and the capitals of Europe. The family quarrel broke when Mrs. Harry Payne Whitney, sister of Reginald Vanderbilt, took Gloria and kept her. Mrs. Vanderbilt started court proceedings to get her back. And this began the legal ~~xx~~ fight which turned into an attempt to prove that Mrs. Vanderbilt was no fit person to have custody of her daughter. Mrs. Vanderbilt's own mother testified against her character, and the testimony quickly became so sordid that the Judge ordered the doors locked and everybody kept out. Since then it's been an affair of secrecy and rumors -- coming now to today's mystifying climax.



PLAY

In England they have just broadcast a play without a name. It has been shown for two ~~thousand~~<sup>hundred</sup> years and still has no name. The actors are the bachelors of Cheshire, of Cheshire cheese and Cheshire cats. One of the bachelors takes the role of a three-legged horse. Another is Beelzebub, the witch doctor.

And the play without a name is also a play without a point - no story, no plot. The three legged horse and Beelzebub, the witch doctor, cavort for the benefit of the girls. The purpose of the play is for the bachelors to get acquainted with the local damsels, the Cheshire kittens, I suppose you'd call them. Object, matrimony! And maybe that's point enough for any play.

## STATIC

Among the enemies of the human race, along with war, pestilence, famine, wearisome talkers and bill collectors - is static. And in Rochester today a battalion of public benefactors gather to put the quietus on that crackling, buzzing enemy of radio reception. ~~It is~~

8 1/2  
Q conference to eliminate static. Dr. Baker of the R.C.A. Victor Company, tells me that there is really no excuse for static, which is no longer an uncontrollable phenomenon of nature, but is a man-made affair. He explains that the radio mechanism of today has reached such a point of perfection that static is merely a lack of proper precautions; interfering noises transmitted from electrical equipment ~~that are not~~ <sup>that isn't</sup> properly shielded. Power lines are not shielded. Home electrical appliances and dial telephones cause interference.

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All of these things can be guarded against, with static eliminated. Dr. Baker adds that the lack of proper shielding is retarding the development of short-wave, television, and other wireless progress.

9 1/2  
Stop static say the Rochester statisticians. And the best way for me to stop static is to say s-l-u-t-m.