

AIRPLANES

Lowell Thomas Broadcast,
for the Literary Digest,
Saturday, October 17, 1931.

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1 There are big doings in the New
2 York area over this week-end; that ^{is} ~~are~~
3 big ^{sky} ~~doings~~. Two days of wholesale
4 spectacular flying are being staged
5 for the ^{relief} ~~benefit~~ of unemployment. The
6 New York Area is supposed to raise
7 twelve million dollars for the benefit
8 of the jobless, and the sky navigators
9 are doing their share.

10 At the Long Island airports
11 there ~~will be~~ ^{are} aerial sham battles, with
12 squadrons of planes attacking the
13 airports.

14 There ^{were today and there will be tomorrow} ~~will be~~ hair-raising stunts
15 ~~flying that will~~ ^{to} keep the crowds gasping.
16 All of the New York papers today are full
17 of the doings of the flying circus, which
18 is capering and cavorting about in the
19 sky, in the good work of easing
20 unemployment.

1 In the middle-West the big
2 aeronautical news ^{of the day was} ~~today is~~ the flight of
3 the giant dirigible, the **Akron**. The huge
4 American airship made a long and
5 ambitious cruise over the farm lands
6 and the towns of the middle states. *Hundreds of*
7 Thousands of people craned their necks
8 gazing skyward to get a good look at the
9 Leviathan of the air, that sailed so
10 gracefully and impressively, high above
11 the earth. *The Akron flew over Chicago.*

12 ^{also} The **Akron** flew over Joliet,
13 Illinois. That's where the big Illinois
14 State penitentiary is. The Warden
15 ordered all activities suspended for a
16 while so ~~that~~ the convicts could look
17 as long as they pleased at the ship
18 that navigates among the clouds.

19 And there was one convict who
20 looked long. He looked with gaping eyes.
21 The International News Service gives his
22 name as Lyman Hall. He is 73 years old,
23 and a lifer. For 35 years he has been
24 within the walls of the grim prison at
25 Joliet, isolated from the rest of the

1 world, a stranger to the doings of these
2 modern days.

3 Yes, the 73-year-old lifer looked
4 long and hard at the ~~long, slender~~ *giant argosy*
5 ~~zeppelin~~ navigating through the sky, and
6 he just kept repeating one thing:
7 IS IT REAL? No he couldn't believe it
8 was real. He asked one man and then
9 another in an astonished, incredulous
10 way, TELL ME, [^] *tell me,* IS IT REAL?

11 Yes, it was real all-right and
12 there is many another remarkable
13 actuality of our time which the 73-year-old
14 lifer has never seen.

By the way, that

1 ~~The~~, big Italian transatlantic
2 flight is scheduled to come off in the
3 latter part of November.

4 The plan is, as the Associated
5 Press reminds us, for 24 giant bombers
6 to fly from Italy to New York, across
7 the South Atlantic via the Azores.

8 The planes are to be of the same
9 type as those in the Italian expedition
10 which flew across the South Atlantic
11 to Brazil last December.

1 President and Mrs. Hoover are
2 leaving Washington today. They ~~will~~^{are} motor ^{ing}
3 to Annapolis ~~where they will~~^{to} board one of
4 Uncle Sam's great fighting ships, the
5 Arkansas.

6 ----- Yes, the nation's first family
7 who dwell in the White House are on their
8 way to the big celebration at Yorktown.
9 They will take part in ceremonies at
10 which a whole battalion of ~~sax~~ celebrities
11 will be present. There will be Marshall
12 Petain, Commander of the French Army,
13 during the World War, and also General
14 Pershing.

15 Among the other participants will
16 be the Governors of the thirteen states
17 which were of the original thirteen
18 colonies.

19 And don't let us forget another
20 interesting guest at Yorktown. He is
21 Lord Cornwallis, the British peer who is
22 a descendant of that earlier Lord
23 Cornwallis who commanded the British at
24 Yorktown.

25 The present Lord Cornwallis has
proven to be a genial and engaging figure.

1 He is the jolly type of British peer.
2 And he hasn't any narrow-minded
3 prejudices to prevent him from taking a
4 real part in the ceremonies commemorating
5 the defeat of the British in North
6 America. He isn't at all bashful about
7 the fact that his ancestor surrendered
8 at Yorktown. It was just part of the
9 fortunes of war.

10 He points out that his ancestor
11 Lord Cornwallis didn't have any hard
12 feelings. A couple of days after the
13 surrender George Washington, as Commander
14 of the American forces, entertained his
15 defeated adversary, Lord Cornwallis at
16 dinner, and at that dinner both the
17 victors and the vanquished toasted each
18 other on those terms of good fellowship
19 and the lack of animosity which are the
20 characteristics of good soldiers.

21 Well, at Yorktown, President and
22 Mrs. Hoover are going to see some grand
23 sights. Pageants are being held to
24 illustrate that decisive struggle over
25 150 years ago, which ended the war of the

1 American Revolution.

2 Those old uniforms of the British
3 redcoats are seen, and the uniforms of
4 the Colonists, and also those of the
5 French.

6 And by the way much attention is
7 being paid to the fact that the French
8 were so important in the winning of
9 the American Revolution. Of course we
10 all know about Lafayette. Yes, and there
11 was Rochambeau, and his French Army, who
12 helped Washington. But they say there
13 has been too little attention paid to
14 the part that the French Fleet ~~xxxx~~
15 played in those memorable events. If
16 Cornwallis surrendered it was only
17 because the French Fleet had beaten the
18 British Fleet, and thus cut off
19 Cornwallis' line of retreat by sea.

20 And so they are erecting a monument
21 to the French Admiral DeGrasse, who
22 struck a heavy blow against the naval
23 might of Britain and did so much for the
24 independence of the Colonies.

25 Yes, tonight President Hoover is

1 on his way to that Yorktown celebration
2 and the United Press points out
3 something that is more than mere
4 festivity.

5 Aboard that brave warship, the
6 Arkansas, are a few high naval officers.
7 Yes, and something of a controversy is
8 on between the President and the heads
9 of the Navy. And so aboard the Arkansas
10 are represented the two sides of one of
11 the large disputes of the day.

12 I suppose the President and the
13 Admirals are going to have a few things
14 to say to each other while the Arkansas
15 is steaming south to Yorktown. But
16 it's all going to be good-natured.
17 President Hoover has let it be known
18 that he is going to stick to his guns in
19 the face of the assembled admirals.
20 But he said that in a good-humored way.

21 ~~But~~ ~~While~~ meanwhile that Navy
22 controversy is being stubbornly
23 contested. The President has rejected
24 the latest proposals offered him by the
25 Navy Department. He is determined that

1 economy shall rule and expenses must
2 be cut. He has particular ideas about
3 just how much those expenses must be
4 cut and he is dead-set and altogether
5 determined in the matter.

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1 ~~xxx~~

2 (A new corporation held its first
3 directors' meeting today. Well, there
4 are plenty of new corporations that
5 hold directors' meetings but then this
6 was a big corporation, a billion-dollar *one*.
7 ~~corporation.~~

8 Yes, and it's a thing of interest
9 to all of us. It is called the National
10 Credit Corporation, and its job is to
11 get busy and help the business situation
12 in a big way.

13 This is the organization which has
14 been formed to carry out the work which
15 President Hoover suggested for easing
16 credits and thawing out frozen assets.)

17 The Board of Directors gathered
18 in the New York Federal Reserve Bank.
19 There were twelve directors, who were
20 elected officers. George M. Reynolds, of
21 Chicago, a prominent financial figure,
22 was chosen as Chairman, and then the
23 Directors went ahead and discussed a
24 plan of campaign for advancing funds to
25 banks whose credit is tied up.

1 Yes, the National Credit
2 Corporation is on the job with a big
3 blow-torch, ready to thaw out those
4 frozen credits.
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Dr. Alfred N.
Goldsmith -
V-P and technical
expert of R.C.A.

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1 I've been wondering about those
2 new phonograph records, the ones that
3 are so crammed full of music that they
4 will play right through for 20 minutes
5 and give you a whole long composition
6 without a break. When you are playing
7 a symphony or an opera on a phonograph
8 it IS awkward to have to change records,
9 so often right in the middle of the
10 music. The new record, which contains
11 several times as much on it, why that
12 represents a splendid and revolutionary
13 advance in the art of the phonograph.

14 This week's Literary Digest gives
15 us an informative article on the subject.
16 It tells us that the new records are
17 made possible by the discovery of a new
18 substance out of which to manufacture
19 ~~phonograph~~ records. With the new
20 material you're able to put the sound
21 grooves much closer together than was
22 possible before.

23 The Digest adds that the new
24 records revolve at a much slower speed
25 than the old. Well, ~~that meant that~~


1 ~~the engineers had to devise a gear-shift~~
2 ~~mechanism, which can be installed on~~
3 ~~the ordinary phonograph and slow down-~~
4 ~~its speed to the extent which the new~~
5 ~~records require.~~

6 Well, there are many fascinating
7 things to be told about phonograph
8 records. For instance, take that old
9 scratching noise. The engineers have
10 taken the scratch out of ^{the} ~~phonograph~~
11 records. How did they do it? But wait
12 a minute. What's the use of my trying
13 to tell ~~you~~ anything about that? Why
14 not get it from a man who knows, from
15 one of the greatest engineering experts
16 in the phonograph field? He's right
17 here beside me. He is Doctor Alfred N.
18 Goldsmith, vice-president and technical
19 expert of R.C.A.

20 Well, Doctor Goldsmith, how in the
21 world did you and your brother-engineers
22 manage to take ^{that familiar old} ~~the~~ scratch out of ~~the~~
23 phonograph records?
24
25

FOR DOCTOR GOLDSMITH

Well, part of it was so simple that it may sound absurd. Until recently, the composition out of which records were made was full of a gritty powder. This powder had a useful effect on the needle. It wore the needle down so that it made a good fit in the groove which produced the sound. But at the same time that fine gritty powder caused a scratching noise.

So, all we had to do was to eliminate the scratch powder. But it did take a long stretch of hard work before we could produce a satisfactory record without that gritty substance. Some scratch, however, still remained. And that had the engineers guessing. So they went ahead at the great R.C.A. Victor laboratories at Camden to do some scientific detective work. They 

1 hunted down the cause of that remaining
2 scratching effect with as much ingenuity
3 as Sherlock Holmes in quest of a clue.

4 They found that the scratch was
5 not caused by the needle or by the
6 stuff of which the record was made. And
7 they finally discovered that it was all
8 because of the original recording
9 process. When music or speaking was
10 recorded, there was just one little
11 trick used that caused the scratch.

12 ~~It would take too long to tell~~
13 ~~about the technical side of this, but~~
14 ~~the fact is that when the method of~~
15 ~~original recording was changed, why it~~
16 ~~resulted in the complete elimination of~~
17 ~~that old-fashioned scratch which had~~
18 ~~come to be accepted as an inevitable~~
19 ~~part of music on the phonograph.~~

20 It's hard to realize what a
21 delicate process the recording of
22 phonograph records really is. Some
23 sounds are particularly difficult to
24 record, and are enough to make the sound
25 engineers tear their hair.

1 The flute, for example, is easy.
2 You are not likely to have much trouble
3 in recording its tone. Men's voices are
4 easy too. But take the piano -- it will
5 sound like a harp that is falling to
6 pieces unless the recording is just
7 right.

8 And then there's the violin. If
9 everything isn't just so, why the fiddle
10 will sound like a flute.

11 The female voice is a problem.
12 I don't have to tell you what a high
13 soprano note sounds like if the recording
14 isn't done well. You can use your
15 imagination.

16 It's just a case of one problem
17 after another, but the technicians have
18 ~~just~~ gone ahead, and solved the puzzles
19 one by one. And now with that newly
20 devised record, which plays the movement
21 of a symphony right through without a
22 break -- well, it simply makes a new era
23 in the history of the phonograph.

24 It's too bad that the man who
25 lies so desperately ill at East Orange,

1 New Jersey, isn't able to witness this
2 new triumph. I mean Thomas Edison, of
3 course -- who, with those epic-making
4 experiments years ago, made the phonograph
5 possible.

Speaking of revolving records doctor, here's a new turn, Page 18

1 ^{I mean}
2 a new turn ~~was taken today~~ in a
3 hot election campaign which is being
4 held in a small community of Northern
5 England. That community is a rather
6 inconspicuous corner ~~in~~ ^{of} this broad world
7 of ours. But just the same, the election
8 campaign there is attracting attention
9 far and wide. People who ordinarily
10 don't take much interest in a big British
11 political fight are wondering whether
12 Ramsay MacDonald will succeed in getting
13 himself re-elected to Parliament.

2
14 Well, his chances look better
15 tonight. The International News Service
16 reports that a Communist has announced
17 himself a candidate for Parliament at
18 Seaham, ^{England,} Prime Minister MacDonald's local
19 constituency. And this Communist
20 candidate threatens to split the Labor
21 vote.

22 Ramsay MacDonald is running as a
23 Labor candidate, but most of his support
24 will come from the Conservative and
25 Liberal voters. His ^{Labor} old friends are
are lined up against him, and are

1 supporting a candidate of their own.

2 The betting odds swung sharply in
3 favor of MacDonald today, partly because
4 of the entrance of a Communist candidate
5 into the election.

6 On the other hand, Arthur Henderson
7 who succeeded MacDonald as the head of the
8 Labor party, seems to have ^{had} his chances
9 of re-election to Parliament taken
10 down a bit. And once more it's a case
11 of a Communist. An ultra-Red radical
12 has announced his candidacy in the
13 Lancashire district where Henderson is
14 running. And that threatens to split the
15 Labor vote, and may possibly cause the
16 defeat of the Labor party.

END

Well, I'm off to the banquet now. I mean the organization meeting of the New York Chapter of the Tall Story Club.

That certainly is going to be one tall affair. Everything is tall, even the menu. That menu was especially designed to inspire the prevaricating talents of the mind. After the list of celebrities get through with that tall menu, they ought to be able to tell whoppers as tall as the world's tallest building, where the banquet will be held.

You'll get a laugh when the announcer at the tall-story convention tonight reels off the tall things to eat.

In fact, I can feel the effect of that high and lofty meal in advance. It makes me want to tell a tall one. But the time for that is at 9 O'clock this evening, Eastern Standard time, when the New York Chapter of the Tall Story Club swings into action up in the air, and on the air, from coast to coast. And now, so far as the news is concerned -

SO LONG UNTIL TOMORROW.