

Gadgets To Light Cigaretts Draw \$50 Million Year From Americans

By HAL BOYLE
NEW YORK — (AP) — In a world of free matches Americans are forking out \$50,000,000 annually for gadgets to light their cigarettes. The First World War popularized the wrist watch. And what that war did for the wrist watch the Second World War has done for the cigarette lighter.

"Now the flint business alone is bigger than the entire lighter industry 15 years ago," said Alfred R. Nathan, vice president of the Ronson Art Metal Works, Inc. The Ronson company—the equivalent of General Motors in its field—soon will market its 35,000,000th lighter. It was founded 56 years ago by the late Louis A. Ronson, a metallurgical engineer who died in 1940. He was a cheeked man with a passion for maroon—he even wore maroon shirts.

"Oddly, as a young man he once won a \$3,000 prize from the Belgian government for developing a safety match," Nathan recalled. Big Fortune Amassed Repenting of this, Ronson turned to the mechanical lighter. His biggest contribution was a push button invention that brought the light to life with the pressure of a finger. It made him so much money he could pal around with kings. He even bought a 70-foot yacht so he could sail to see them.

"He had lighters from one end of the yacht to the other," said Nathan. "Even had one in his bathroom." One of Nathan's present vice presidential duties is the assembling of a museum of mechanical lighters. In the early years they put lighters in everything from sword canes to baby shoes cast in bronze," he said. This rooco period is dying out. The Ronson company, for example, has cut down its number of models from 1,000 to about 100. "The thing was just getting out of hand," Nathan said. Soldiers Grateful In his museum collections are a number sent by grateful soldiers who said the lighters saved their lives by stopping flac, shell fragments or bullets. One soldier scratched his will on his lighter. "I leave everything to brother Jim," and Nathan said the will was held valid.

Why should anyone fork out \$6 to \$5,000 (a custom built, jewel encrusted job) for a lighter when nearby every drug store now offers giveaway matches? "We don't want to make any

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OUT OUR WAY By J. R. Williams

odious comparisons," remarked Nathan, indicating the match industry couldn't understand that one either. "Some people like to be modern. A lighter is modern, and people feel awkward using them than they do matches. That's our belief anyway." ONE JOB ENOUGH HOUSTON, Oct. 14.—(AP)—Houston trade unions contend firemen should fight fires and not build houses on their off time. The Houston building trades council asked the civil service commission yesterday to stop firemen from working in spare time as carpenters and painters. Reports were that one group of firemen had contracts to build a house.

Magnuson Aims For Adequate Defense Of Alaska

WASHINGTON, Oct. 14.—(AP)—Senator Magnuson (D-Wash.) said Tuesday he hopes to be able to organize in the next session of Congress an unofficial committee of senators to look into all phases of national defense affecting Alaska.

He said it is his plan to have this committee see that such defenses are adequate. "We have not done enough for Alaska, the most vulnerable section of the nation," Magnuson told a reporter. "We hope through our committee to render every aid in seeing that everything possible is done to defend the Northwest and the territory." Magnuson said he believes every area should have adequate defenses and that they do not

YELL ROUTS PROWLER

PENDLETON, Oct. 14.—(AP)—A janitor's voice frightened an intruder away from the junior high school early Wednesday night. The janitor heard the sound of breaking glass and yelled—and whoever was trying to break in left hurriedly, leaving two pinch bars behind.

The initials "TV" have been introduced into the language as being synonymous with television.

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