

Movie Pictures Story of One of Oregon's Most Notorious Convicts, John Omar Pinson

By CONRAD PRANGE
Staff Writer, The Statesman

"He was a brutal, vicious criminal and we are not trying to glamorize him in any way. He is no hero!"

Those are the words which open a movie—due in Salem this week—based on the life and crimes of one John Omar Pinson. Pinson is an inmate serving a life term in the Oregon State Prison on the eastern edge of Salem.

The movie is "Gangbusters." It was made by the same people who produce the well-known radio show of the same name. It tells the unpretty, if interesting, story of a man who shot an Oregon state police officer, set fire to Oregon state prison, escaped from the same prison, was once rumored to have been buried in a lonely grave, and is now behind bars again.

The movie hangs as close as possible to the known facts about Pinson's career in crime. However, in some parts of the film version some liberties have been taken, probably in the interests of interest and story.

Name Familiar
To anyone who read the local newspapers in years from 1947 to 1951, the name of John Pinson may have been a familiar one. He figured in all sorts of trouble, including at-prison escapes, riots and finally in a successful crash-out.

Even while hunted as an escapee he was involved in one of the most bizarre episodes of Oregon's somewhat lengthy string of odd penal happenings. He was born Omar August Pinson, March 31, 1918, at Joplin, Mo. The only son, police records state, of respectable, middle-class parents. An uneventful boyhood, spent near Pomeroy, Iowa, ended the hard way in 1936, when he was sent to Iowa State Training School for house-breaking.

In 1941 he was sentenced to a brief term in Iowa State Prison for auto tampering. He had married and moved to Pasco, Wash., where he worked as a lineman and electrician.

Paroled in 1945
But in 1944 he was sentenced to Washington State Prison for burglary and paroled in 1945.

After a couple of more scrapes with the law Pinson, then 28, found himself in Hood River on the night of April 25, 1947. While trying to break into a service station he engaged in a gun battle with state police officer Delmond E. Rondeau, 32.

A bullet in the chest killed Rondeau. Pinson fled and a day later was captured by a posse of officers near Ordinance as he tried to slip out of the area aboard a freight train.

Pinson was tried and convicted of first degree murder. A jury saved his life by recommending life imprisonment. Pinson was quoted as saying he didn't mean to kill the policeman. Rondeau wasn't there to answer.

Tried to Crash Gate
Shortly after his arrival at the Oregon prison at Salem Pinson tried to crash through a yard gate in a prison truck. In the fall of 1948 Pinson and seven other cons set fire to the prison flax plant in another unsuccessful attempt to escape.

Then shortly after midnight on May 30, 1949, Pinson and a pal, William P. Benson, 44, serving five years for armed robbery, climbed over the prison wall and escaped, as the papers said, "in a hail of bullets." Pinson had engineered the escape from the prison bullpen, which is supposed to be a tough nut to crack.

About three months and several thousand tips later Benson was found lying in a Columbus, Ohio, alley. At a hospital he said he had swallowed poison because he thought he was dying of cancer.



John Omar Pinson, convicted murderer now at the Oregon state penitentiary, whose life story is pictured in the new movie "Gangbusters."

He said that shortly after the escape he had buried the fatally-wounded Pinson in the woods near Kellogg, Idaho. Or, rather, at first he said he buried Pinson near Salem, and later changed the site to Idaho.

Officers were skeptical. A Spokane, Wash., detective was quoted as saying he had positive proof that Pinson was very much alive and up to his old tricks in that area.

Led Police Astray
Benson, however, in an effort to prove his story led police through woods and remote areas of the Idaho panhandle and through parts of western Montana in search of the "grave." He finally told weary police he was "confused."

When he was returned to the Oregon prison he led local officers on an unsuccessful hunt for a grave near Salem.

About this time Pinson made the FBI's 10 most wanted list. Several months later he shot his way out of a roadblock at Polson,

Mont., and became No. 4 on the FBI list. His days of freedom were numbered.

Following a tip-off from a girlfriend Pinson was recognized in Webb City, Mo., in April, 1950. On Aug 28 the hounded fugitive was nailed by a alert special agent who spotted Pinson as the escapee was going to register a car at the state capitol at Pierre, S. D.

"Can't Trust Anyone"
"This living on the run is no good," Pinson was quoted as telling officers after his capture. "You never stay in one town more than one night. You can't trust anyone you meet."

Pinson was returned to Oregon State Prison. On the night of Oct. 31, 1951, a group of 20 cons overpowered seven prison guards in a futile attempt to escape. Pinson was singled out by the then warden Virgil O'Malley as the ringleader in the Halloween night caper. This was his third attempt at freedom.

"I guess I'm a failure at escaping," Pinson was quoted as saying at a prison discipline committee hearing the next day. A failure at 34.

The word at the prison now is

that Pinson is "doing good time." He's apparently settled down and is "cooperative." As a lifer he is eligible to be considered for parole. His only other possibilities for legal freedom are executive clemency (remote in this case) and death.

Editor Critical Of Information Agency Tactics

NEW YORK (UP)—The United States Information Agency is putting America's "worst foot forward" by trying to duplicate the job being done infinitely better by the independent U. S. news agencies, Roy W. Howard said Saturday.

Howard, chairman of the executive committee of the Scripps Howard newspapers, has just returned from an around-the-world tour that lasted six weeks.

Accompanied by his wife and secretary, Howard arrived at noon by Pan American Airways from Paris.

Howard told reporters the U. S. Point Four program is "one of the most effective good-will builders." By contrast, however, he said the U. S. Information Service program of the USIA is contributing virtually nothing to U.S. prestige abroad.

"I would be the last one to suggest another congressional investigation," he said, "but it does seem to me this whole USIA program could properly be the subject of investigation by Congress."

As an example of what he had seen, Howard cited "one country, which I don't want to name, which has a claimed literacy of 12 per cent of the population. We have 150 persons working for USIA there. About 17 of them I am told, are Americans. The man who is running it is an intelligent newspaperman who is trying to do the best job possible in the circumstances. Every day he is deluged with thousands of words from USIA—most of it more than 36 hours old—which has already been adequately and completely covered by the United States news agencies. What he tries to do, consequently, is concentrate mainly on pictures, newsreels and cartoons."

Howard said "all three American news agencies are doing a magnificent job of telling America's story, but they are continually handicapped and bedeviled by this giveaway stuff from USIS which has the same value as anything you get for nothing—and that's nothing."

On this point, Ross observed, "with every privilege goes a responsibility."

"Newspapers have a great many privileges, as well as they should," Ross observed.

"With these privileges, however, newspapers should exercise care and caution so that your privilege and my privilege are not threatened by over-zealous exercise of their privilege."

Ross added that the question of freedom of the press was in his opinion "a matter outside this case."

He noted in addition that many of the arguments made by defense attorneys for acquittal had been ruled upon by the court at two prior hearings at which motions for dismissal of the indictment against the publisher were denied.

a quick 'thank you' and get off the stage in time for the commercial."

Ann Blyth's 'Poetic Sermon' Creates Hollywood Sensation

By JAMES BACON
HOLLYWOOD (UP)—Ann Blyth probably has sung at more religious benefits than any other star in Hollywood. Yet at her most recent one she talked instead of singing. It created a sensation.

In the audience at the time were many of the biggest names in Hollywood, plus Los Angeles' Cardinal McIntyre. When she finished most of the 1,500 people present asked for a copy of her talk.

Written by Ann and her doctor husband, Jim McNulty, the talk was almost a poetic sermon. Her delivery of it was superb drama. Let's look at some excerpts:

"In the beginning was the word, and the word was God, and the word was God. And since then a billion, million words have been spoken. Soft words, hard words, cold words, warm words.

"There are words that sing and jump and skip and dance—gay words: Little girl words. And words with fun in their eyes and things in their pockets and their hair mussed: Little boy words.

There are young words. And wise old words with a glint in their eye. There are words wide-eyed with wonder, soft as a baby's feet, strong as a baby's twining fingers. There are warm, cuddly baby words.

And steel words: Iron words; thrusting, stinging, lance words; cruel blades of words—and sweet words. Soothing unguent words; father, mother words: Words that press their cheek against yours and hold your hand: That candle-light your darkness: That raise you like a child again and hoist you onto their shoulders. . . .

"Words are everything that man is; everything he can be—they are everything he should not be. They are his slave; they are his master—in a world of the mercy of the word of God man is at the mercy of words.

Infinite Wonder
"In the beginning was the word," all the infinite wonder and beauty and truth and love and life that God is, uttered—expressed—in one divine word. This is the truth. And by its nature, every word should be a reflection of the divine truth.

"I plead with the press to remember—powerful words. That words are written about men—and read by men.

"I plead that infidelity is not new; it isn't even news. It's scandal. That a decalogue broken on the front page helps no one and hurts many. . . . That sensationalism is not brilliance. That sensationalism and emotionalism and carnalism are a direct appeal to man's baser part and the betrayal of a trust.

"You are the light bearers, men

of the press. Whatever way you say it, you lead the way. Don't burlesque man; lead him. You have the words—all the words. You have the truth. And a little beauty and a lot of love of man. Lead him. Lead not the child of God into darkness."

Joan Crawford is the mother of a young architect—but she may find herself a bit crowded if she builds her new house according to the plans of her son Christopher.

This week, Joan showed Chris' plans to co-workers at Columbia where she is making "The Queen Bee." The teenager drew up the plans at boarding school.

"The plans are great," Joan said. "Only, the quarters designed for me are minute and Chris' quarters are tremendous because of the giant size soda fountain he counts on having."

Hollywood may soon help, in a small way, to keep the price of wheat up. The town long has been responsible for the high price of corn.

Jack Carter, Columbia Pictures propmaster, is looking for all the wheat he can find in the filming of the Biblical epic "Joseph and His Brethren." Rita Hayworth's comeback picture.

Thousands of tons will be shown in sequences depicting Egypt's "seven fat years."

The night before the academy awards presentation, Bing Crosby offered Marlon Brando 100 to one odds that Brando would win the top acting Oscar.

The bet was not taken.

The movie industry, in a big way, is starting a move for industry sponsorship of the academy awards telecast.

One important studio executive commented this week: "If successful, you'll hear the winners make speeches next year if they want to—not just mumble

Publisher Loses Plea For Dismissal

LAS VEGAS, Nev., (UP)—Federal Judge John R. Ross Saturday denied a motion for a directed judgment of acquittal in the trial of Las Vegas Sun publisher Herman M. (Hank) Greenspun.

Greenspun is accused of having sent through the mails 874 copies of his newspaper containing a column written by him which the government contends was of "indecent" character in that it "tended to incite murder or assassination" of Sen. Joseph McCarthy.

Greenspun's attorneys, in seeking the acquittal, argued that conviction of the publisher would violate his constitutional guarantee of free speech and freedom of the press.

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By CLAY R. POLLAN
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To develop message for Sunday, read words corresponding to numbers of your Zodiac birth sign.

ARIES MAR. 22 - APR. 20	1 Your 31 Stone 61 Your	LIBRA SEPT. 23 - OCT. 23	30-33-50-53 58-61-62
Taurus APR. 21 - MAY 21	2 Poor 32 And 62 Way	SCORPIO OCT. 24 - NOV. 22	14-16-20-21 25-44-46
1-8-10-22 73-57-87	3 Time 33 Money 63 With	NOV. 23 - DEC. 22	6-7-11-13 56-57-66
GEMINI MAY 22 - JUNE 22	4 To 34 Problems 64 Finances	DEC. 23 - JAN. 20	18-19-45-48 60-63-86-90
12-43-51-64 72-73-74	5 Make 35 Ambition 65 To	JAN. 21 - FEB. 19	41-47-49-45 67-71-76
CANCER JUNE 23 - JULY 23	6 Engage 36 In 66 Problems	FEB. 20 - MAR. 21	5-9-27-29 31-36-80-84
12-15-17-32 39-40-81-82	7 In 37 Takes 67 Give	MAR. 22 - APR. 20	
LEO JULY 24 - AUG. 23	8 Mind 38 Second 68 With	APRIL 21 - MAY 21	
2-3-4-24 26-28-34	9 Today 39 Center 69 Many	MAY 22 - JUNE 21	
VIRGO AUG. 24 - SEPT. 23	10 It 40 Of 70 Place	JUNE 22 - JULY 23	
15-37-38-70 75-78-85-88	11 Conferences 41 People 71 You	JULY 24 - AUG. 23	
	12 You 42 Picture 72 And	AUG. 24 - SEPT. 23	
	13 Aimed 43 Improves 73 Necessary	SEPT. 24 - OCT. 23	
	14 Your 44 Too 74 Buying	OCT. 24 - NOV. 23	
	15 Appear 45 May 75 To	NOV. 24 - DEC. 23	
	16 Actions 46 Impulsive 76 Priority	DEC. 24 - JAN. 23	
	17 Popular 47 Are 77 People	JAN. 24 - FEB. 23	
	18 Early 48 Be 78 Love	FEB. 24 - MAR. 23	
	19 Hours 49 Ready 79 Is	MAR. 24 - APR. 23	
	20 Today 50 News 80 Your	APR. 24 - MAY 23	
	21 Could 51 For 81 Social	MAY 24 - JUNE 23	
	22 Intuitive 52 Necessity 82 Activity	JUNE 24 - JULY 23	
	23 But 53 Way 83 Apparent	JULY 24 - AUG. 23	
	24 Concentrate 54 Of 84 Corner	AUG. 24 - SEPT. 23	
	25 Be 55 Harmony 85 And	SEPT. 24 - OCT. 23	
	26 On 56 At 86 Sad	OCT. 24 - NOV. 23	
	27 A 57 Solving 87 Is	NOV. 24 - DEC. 23	
	28 Personal 58 Come 88 Friendship	DEC. 24 - JAN. 23	
	29 Stripping 59 Dealing 89 Lacking	JAN. 24 - FEB. 23	
	30 Welcome 60 Concerned 90 Affairs	FEB. 24 - MAR. 23	
		MAR. 24 - APR. 23	

Good Adverse Neutral

Strong Sales Technique

COLUMBIA, S. C. (UP)—Gordon L. Chatterton who sells lumber for a couple of western firms unloaded 37,000 board feet from a freight car in a single day. William L. Boozer said the job usually takes three days. The Boozer lumber yard had been faced with heavy demurrage charges when Chatterton volunteered to do it in one.

Local people watched bug-eyed as Chatterton worked and estimated he handled 56 tons of lumber between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m.

The salesman, a husky graduate of the University of Washington, worked his way through school as a longshoreman. Although he still varies his sales routine by taking on unloading jobs, he says he had not unloaded a car of lumber for four months before tackling Boozer's freight.

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