

Southern Cross Constellation Easily Seen in South's Skies

THE SOUTHERN CROSS
By HUGH PRUETT
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An enthusiastic young astronomer of high school age writes that his father a college professor, has been given a leave of absence to help organize a biology department at the university in Caracas, Venezuela. "The whole family is going for a year and I am most anxious to know if I can see the stars of the famous Southern Cross from that location."

Most certainly the boy is going to enjoy the splendors of this southern constellation, known also as Crux. It can even be seen from lower Florida and Texas, but there it just skims the southern horizon "momentarily" so is viewed at a great disadvantage. But from Caracas this celebrated celestial cross when highest will be 20 degrees above the southern skyline and will display its real glory. The farther south one goes, the nearer the zenith Crux appears. From southern Argentina it passes nearly overhead.

The traveler to countries south of ours cannot expect to find the Southern Cross in the early evening sky at all times of the year—unless he goes as far as Uruguay. Like our own familiar star groups, there are seasons when it traverses the sky in the daytime. Around the middle of May, however, it is highest—and due south—at 9 p. m. At the equator it is always above the horizon for 12 hours daily, so will be somewhere in the visible sky at this evening hour from mid-February to mid-August.

The Southern Cross, a figure small enough to fit easily inside

the bowl of well-known Big Dipper, is composed of four stars, three of them quite bright. When due south it stands almost upright. Alpha, at the foot, is the brightest and about a standard first magnitude, white star, Beta and Delta, at the ends of the cross arm are also white and are of magnitudes 1.5 and 3.1. (The higher the number, the dimmer the star). The relative faintness of Delta at the right of the cross arm is the only detractor from the glory of this celebrated asterism. Gamma, magnitude 1.6, is a splendid reddish-orange jewel, blazing from the top of the cross.

To add to the charm of the Southern Cross, the entire figure is enmeshed in a dense part of the Milky Way, that white pathway in the heavens past which countless stars so distant that they cannot be seen individually. Mrs. Isabel Lewis of the U. S. Naval Observatory thinks reports of dissatisfaction regarding this starry cross come from those who have seen it from no farther south than Mexico or Cuba where it is greatly dimmed by the horizon haze. Her view of Crux from the highlands of Ecuador on a clear, moonless night—with a meteor shooting past the cross—fulfilled her fondest expectations.

Girl Thrown From Viaduct

CINCINNATI — (AP) — Gaunt, huge-handed Harry Robertson faced a murder charge Saturday in connection with the death of eight-year-old Patricia Jackson who was thrown from a 60-foot-high viaduct.

The six-foot four-inch itinerant, who said he hears "voices" that call him "yellow," was captured by witnesses a few minutes after the child fell screaming to her death. Mertz identified the 33-year-old World War II veteran as an ex-convict who served three years in Virginia for housebreaking. Robertson identified himself as a former inmate of a veteran's mental hospital at Downey, Ill. He gave his home as Richmond, Va.

Youth Faces Trial

Seattle — (AP) — John Russell Gasser, 20-year-old Seattle University sophomore, has a week in which to enter a plea on a charge of first degree murder.

The additional time was granted Friday when the youth was arraigned in superior court. He is accused of the mutilation slaying of pretty Donna Woodcock, 22-year-old red-haired restaurant car-hop.

POLICE BLUSH

DETROIT — (AP) — Police of suburban Hamtramck were a bit red-faced Friday as they intensified their hunt for a sneak thief who invaded police headquarters Friday and stole four typewriters and the detectives' rollcall book.

CHINESE DOLLAR SINKS
SHANGHAI — (AP) — The Chinese dollar fell to a new low Saturday of 7,000,000 to \$1 on the black market.



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IMPORTED DIRECT from India at great expense, Swami Tallahassee is bringing the ancient art of the fakirs to VLT audiences in the current midsummer variety show, "Stuff 'n Nonsense." Here the Swami is shown testing the edge of his beheading sword after making an unusual blunder in a trick involving a member of the audience. (Friends may recognize the Swami as Marv Krenk, new president of the Very Little Theatre.) The sparkling revue is playing at the Fairgrounds theatre through July 24. (Staff photo, Wiltshire engraving.)

Northwest Gets Flood Relief Valued at One Million-Plus

By WILLIAM E. LOWELL
WASHINGTON — (AP) — Relief materials valued at more than \$1,000,000 have been sent to the recently flooded areas of the Northwest by the War Assets Administration.

The shipments include a wide variety of property, ranging from a mobile crane to tableware and bed pillows.

A WAA spokesman said Thursday that the \$1,000,000 figure was reached June 18 and shipments of surplus property into northern Idaho, Washington state and Oregon were still continuing as the recession of flood waters disclosed additional needs.

Those were the sections most affected by the surge of water over the banks of the Columbia river and its tributaries late in May and during June.

President Truman declared the flood-swept cities and farm lands a disaster area May 31.

Plans for utilizing surplus government property to meet emergency needs already were in their preliminary stages then and Wilfred W. Gau of St. Paul, Minn., WAA liaison officer, flew to Seattle to set up a clearance center for locating the needed surplus property.

A nationwide search for equipment and materials was started and, as they were located the supplies were transferred to the federal works agency for distribution to flood victims.

Within four days after declaration of the emergency, WAA had made available such badly needed materials as 11,000 blankets, 11,000 mattresses, thousands of sheets, hand towels, bed spreads, pillows and similar items. Within two weeks the list in-

cluded six railroad cars of prefabricated buildings, 168,000 pounds of nails from Cincinnati, 15,000 pillows and 30,000 feet of hose from San Francisco, as well as various items of construction equipment. Also distributed were many hundreds of pieces of household equipment, thousands of pieces of tableware, and quantities of sanitary and medical supplies.

Such essential specialized equipment as generators and water purification units were sought out and rushed to stricken cities to aid in quick resumption of normal public services.

Pending the assembling of housing, trailers and tents, WAA sheltered 2,300 evacuees in its buildings at Vancouver, Wash., and Swan Island, near Portland, Ore.

Meantime, as a result of negotiations with the Army for equipment not yet declared surplus but badly needed in the flood zone, the Alaska command agreed to ship, without expense, 50 pieces of construction machinery.

WAA said a complete inventory of its operations is being prepared.

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College Project Okayed

SALEM — (AP) — Attorney General George Neuner ruled Friday that higher education building funds can be used to construct walks and sidewalks at Oregon State College, grade and landscape a housing project at the University of Oregon, build barns at OSC and build and ROTC gun shed at OSC.

The State Emergency Board and Board of Control had approved these projects subject to the attorney general's approval.

Baby Saved From Train

MILWAUKIE, Ore. — (AP) — The 7-month-old daughter of Harold Wakefield was alive Saturday after he jerked her from a stalled car seconds before it was smashed by an onrushing train.

Wakefield was northbound for his Portland home Friday when he approached the main line track here. He said he stopped at the crossing, saw the train some distance away and started up again.

His car stalled on the track and Wakefield managed to back up a foot by using the starter but he failed to clear the rails.

The train, Southern Pacific Rogue River, thundered up to the crossing and Wakefield picked up his daughter and leaped. The car was knocked 15 feet seconds later when the locomotive smashed into it.

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Fire Destroys Albany Mill

ALBANY, Ore. — (AP) — Flames raced through Albany's largest sawmill Friday night, destroying

the plant at a loss of approximately \$150,000.

It was the Edwards Brothers Lumber Co. mill of approximately 75,000 feet daily capacity. The mill, constructed in 1937 and acquired by the Edwards brothers five years ago, employed 30. Firemen found the plant engulfed in flames when they called out at 7:30 p. m. The mill was able to save the separate mill and piled-up lumber.

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