



Let 'Er Blow!—That's 200 pounds of nitroglycerin on the end of that weird-looking apparatus. The explosive was detonated over the mouth of a blazing oil well at Elk City, Okla., and snuffed out the flames for 10 minutes. However 100-foot flames sprang up again from the well, ignited by a gas explosion. Further attempts to extinguish the fire will be continued. (AP Wirephoto.)

## Too Many Irish Bachelors, So Marriage Drive Is On

Dublin, Jan. 18 (AP)—Thousands of Irish bachelors are heading for early weddings, if plans of the state and social organizations work out.

Concerned over the effects of Ireland's low marriage rate, believed to be the lowest in the world on the population figures, social workers are drafting plans to bring Irish bachelors to the altar whether they like it or not.

Statistics prepared by social organizations show that one in four Irish people never marry. Many of those marry late in life. They pass the age of fertility before they can add substantially to the nation's dangerously depleted population.

Census statistics bear out the bad effects of the low marriage and fertility rate on the population trends.

One hundred years ago, Ireland had a child population of 1,836,298. In 1941, the number had been reduced to 815,000.

Correspondingly, the number of old persons past the age of fertility shows an increase from 174,450 in 1851 to 308,823 in 1941.

That is what the social workers and the government plan to alter by boosting the marriage rate, and lower the average marrying age.

The bachelors, on the other hand, charge that existing social and economic conditions make it impossible for them to marry.

In support of their stand they point to the high rate of taxation on bachelors, and state that this in fact achieves the very opposite to the government's intention of forcing the reluctant bachelor to the altar.

The burden of taxes, they claim, makes it impossible for them to put aside the necessary nest egg.

Housing conditions also support the bachelor's contention. The housing shortage is acute and rents are high. As in many other countries, young couples with babies are blacklisted in apartment houses.

Consequently, they postpone their weddings until they can get houses of their own, and the population figures stand still.

But the state intends to cut the bachelor's feet from under him in this defence. Among the latest government projects is a £120,000,000 housing and hospitalization program aimed at supplying the needed 111,000 homes over a ten-year period.

Housing loan societies are also receiving top level priority in the national picture. Statistics show that housing societies advanced £3,000,000 to young couples during 1948 and the figure for 1949 may be even higher.

A drive for rural development and national repopulation has been carried to the United States by the founder of the Muintir Na Tire Organization, Father John Hayes, who has toured American cities explaining and enlisting support for his "back to the land" movement.

## Hollywood Master-Minds Are Stumped Over New Movie Star

By VIRGINIA MacPHERSON

Hollywood, Jan. 18 (AP)—Hollywood's all a-dither these days over a new movie star nobody ever expected would amount to much. And this brings up a ticklish problem that's even got the press agents stumped.

They have their orders. Pull out all the stops to ballyhoo this new star.

But the idea boys are stymied. They don't know whether to make with the "cheesecake" stuff or dig up a few old "he-man" gags.

Trouble is, it's a mule. But the master-minds are going nuts trying to figure out whether it's a "he" mule or a "she" mule.

There's also a strong suspicion going around that this new star

is an "it." No sex-appeal, in other words. And that's something Hollywood can't cope with.

Director Arthur Lubin pointed out the mule's name was "Miss Missouri" before she crashed Hollywood.

So far, so good. But the studio changed the name to "Francis," to fit the name of the talking mule in the movie. And by now everybody's confused plenty.

Not so with the critics. They broke out with rave notices on a picture hardly anybody could get excited about when it was in the works.

That didn't include Lubin. "Francis" was his baby from the minute he bought the story from newspaper publisher David Stern. He said he always knew it would be a hilarious movie.

"But everybody told me I was nuts," he shrugged. "Even my agent said if I had anything to do with a picture about a talking mule he would have nothing to do with me. And he meant it. He quit."

"I peddled the story all over town. Every story expert said it was screamingly funny. But they said it was 'too unusual' for a movie. A mule who talks back to army generals. Haw!"

Lubin finally took it to Universal-International where they nervously agreed to let him take a whack at it.

"We finally cooked up some little metal gadgets to put in its mouth. They were attached to invisible strings. These gadgets made the mule nervous, and as he twisted his lips to get 'em out we turned on the cameras. It looks just like he's talking."

Lubin took no chances. He called "Francis" everything—"he," "she," and "it"—just to be safe.

But the U. S. Army didn't care what Francis' sex is. The big brass was so impressed with her she it's acting talents they're footing the bills for a fancy over-seas premiere in Berlin.

Glamour gals, actors, actresses, singers, and dancers are going over to introduce "Francis" to the occupational forces.

But Francis can't go. Gets airsick in planes.

## Temporary Mail Schedule Here

A temporary mail schedule between Salem, Independence, Monmouth, Dallas and Falls City and return has been placed in effect, Postmaster Albert C. Gragg announces.

At the same time he stated that a new schedule would become effective between Salem and Detroit, January 25.

George Kirk, who has operated a star route into Polk county for some time has taken over the transportation of all types of mail on the Falls City run. The first run departs from the Salem postoffice at 6:10 a.m. and operates via Independence, Monmouth, Dallas and Falls City. Returning the route is through Dallas and Rickreall, arriving in Salem at 8:30 in time to connect with north and south bound S.P. trains.

The second trip leaves at 11:15 over part of the same route. A third trip leaves Salem at 2:45 p.m. covering the entire route and then returning to Salem via Monmouth and Independence at 5:15.

The trip to Detroit under the new schedule will leave Salem at 6:40 and return to Salem at 5:15 p.m.

Effective January 25 also, a carrier will leave Mill City at 10:25 a.m. reaching Salem at 11:55. The return to Mill City is scheduled to leave Salem at 2:45.

The temporary schedule into Polk county was brought about when Oregon Motor stages relinquished their contract.

## 2 Vet Groups After Bonuses

Washington, Jan. 18 (AP)—Two major veterans organizations urged congress today to approve a bonus for veterans of World War II.

The Veterans of Foreign Wars renewed its long-standing bonus appeal, and Amvets—a World War II organization—endorsed the bonus for the first time.

The Veterans of Foreign Wars renewed its long-standing bonus appeal, and Amvets—a World War II organization—endorsed the bonus for the first time.

Russell and Clyde A. Lewis, commander-in-chief of the VFW, endorsed pending bills to compute the bonus at the rate of \$3 per day for service in this country and \$4 per day for service overseas.

The maximum bonus would be \$4500, with an extra \$500 for men who were wounded in action.

Committee Chairman John E. Rankin, (D-Miss), has said the bonus bill would be called up for prompt consideration by the committee. He predicts the committee and the congress will approve it.

In their annual statements of legislative aims, the four big veterans groups—the American Legion and the Disabled American Veterans, along with VFW and Amvets—joined in urging the committee to reject the Hoover commission's proposals on reorganizing the veterans administration.

Spokesmen for the four groups said the commission's proposals "would mean more grief for the veteran and more cost for the taxpayer."

## Frank Brown Rites Friday

Funeral services for Frank A. Brown, 65, of 6530 Locust, valley farmer and sportsman who died at his home Monday, will be held from the Clough-Barrick chapel Friday at 1:30 o'clock, Rev. Dudley Strain officiating and interment in City View cemetery.

Brown was born in Ontario, Canada, October 1, 1884, and came to Oregon with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Archie O. Brown, when six years old. He and his father operated a Polk county farm and he continued after the death of his father. During his youth Brown won several cross-country bicycle riding contests and was an ardent fisherman.

Surviving are three sisters, Mrs. Bettie E. Lent, The Dalles; Mrs. Christie L. Moorman, Salem and Mrs. Minnie E. Woodside, Oakland, Calif. and four brothers, Joseph B. and Charles A. Brown, both of Salem; Robert A. Brown, Monmouth and Roy R. Brown, Rose Lodge.

## Hangar Thaw-Out Party in Dallas

Dallas, Ore., Jan. 18 — Deep snow frozen on the rounding roof of the Dallas airport hangar had Owner Joe Card badly worried until he came up with a bright idea.

Because it was frozen, the snow couldn't be scooped off. Card then merely moved the planes out of the hangar and built a huge bonfire in the center of the dirt floor.

Heat soon melted the snow enough so that it could be scooped from the roof. Then—not wishing the fire to go to waste—Card and his wife called in friends to end the day with a weiner roast.

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Swiss! And the Nail Polish Bries—Carol Jean Knight, 7, a victim of 1949's record polio epidemic, gets morale lift through manicure in Oklahoma hospital. Widespread epidemics in 1949 call for record contributions to March of Dimes, January 16-31.

## Baby Blue Bores Baby

Houston, Tex., Jan. 18 (AP)—Baby blue bores baby, a Yale University physician declared.

Baby, from birth to kindergarten, should have a nursery room ablaze with gay colors, Dr. Frances Ilg said at a post-graduate pediatricians course yesterday at Baylor University's College of Medicine.

She said bright colors are important, because a small baby does not see or get any pleasure out of pastels. Even at eight to 12 weeks, many babies, the doctors were told, will show whether they like red better than orange.

Thomas Jefferson recorded planting spinach in his garden in 1811.

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