



Armless Woman Painter—Milie Victorine Dufaux, 55, of Perpignan, France, armless for 19 years following an accident, paints by holding the brush between her teeth.

First Bathtub Yarn Proved To Be Old-Time Mencken Hoax

By HARMAN W. NICHOLS

Washington, Feb. 14 (AP)—I doubt if I can ever look a bathtub in the face again.

I have been guilty of perpetuating a newspaper hoax—the one about the introduction of the tub into the American home. It's all the fault of the Library of Congress.

Back in early December a woman in Council Bluffs, Ia., got herself stuck in a tub and stayed there for 60 hours. It seems she had taken over management of a home owned by a midget friend and decided to take a bath in the midget tub. That sent me to the library to find out about tubs.

In one of the volumes I found a yarn about the "first tub ever installed in America—one used by an Adam Thompson in Cincinnati." It (the tub) was encased in Nicaraguan mahogany, lined with metal. It was seven feet long and four feet wide and weighed 1,750 pounds.

It seems that the story was put out as fiction by H. L. Mencken. Or mostly fiction. He later let it out that Adam Thompson was an "imposter." The writer made the whole thing up.

Anyhow, I got a sharp letter from George N. Lamb, secretary of the Mahogany Association, Inc., which has been worrying about the hoax ever since Mencken wrote it in the New York Evening Mail on Dec. 28, 1917.

"Worst part of it is," says Lamb, "every time anybody tries to bat down the hoax they have to repeat the story. That makes it twice as bad."

It seems that the whole Mencken story turned back history to 1842 when this man "Thompson," a Cincinnati cotton planter, imported a tub and pitched a big party to show it off. First, the story goes—and has been going ever since—he took a hot bath in the morning and a cold bath in the afternoon. Then he invited a flock of big shots to look over the new gimmick. A few of 'em shed their fine clothes and took a few suds.

Apparently it wasn't so. A little more research revealed that Benjamin Franklin was this country's pioneer in systematic bathing.

He shocked the folks around him by taking "two baths a week," according to books on file with the plumbing and heating industries bureau in Chicago.

As early as 1770, Franklin fetched to America a thing that was described as a "bathing slipper."

You would sit on the end of the slipper that looked like the "heel" and put your feet in the part that resembled a toe.

Under the heel part was a place for a small fire, which was supposed to keep the tub warm.

Water was poured in by the bucketful and later was lugged into the back yard and dumped. It must have taken a lot of manpower to perform the task.

After that, Franklin is supposed to have invented a less cumbersome tub resembling an oversized coal scuttle.

It was a copy of some of the old tubs Franklin had seen while abroad and gave rise to many of the legends of how a man got his back washed. Whether he hired small boys to dump pitchers of suds on him or whether his wife did the chore.

Anyhow, let this be the end of the Mencken hoax about Adam Thompson. And forgive me, Mr. Lamb.

September 24, 1949, was New Year, 5710 in Israel, which has adopted the Jewish calendar.

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Columbia Basin Plan Discussed

Portland, Feb. 14 (AP)—How to develop and conserve the Columbia basin's land, water and forests is being talked at a meeting of department of agriculture experts here today.

The two-day session is regarded as the first step in preparing a plan to fit into the comprehensive program of the corps of engineers and the bureau of reclamation. That program now is before congress.

The meeting is being attended by regional heads of nine bureaus and agencies of the department of agriculture and by directors of farm extension work and experiment stations of several northwest land grant colleges. Together they make up the department's regional advisory committee, headed by Herbert M. Peet, the secretary of agriculture's Columbia basin representative.

Aiding them in their discussions are two representatives of other regions: Gladwin E. Young of Lincoln, Neb., who prepared the department's Missouri basin program, and Warren T. Murphy of Salt Lake City, head of the Pacific southwest region.

3 Bus Unions Seek NLR Recognition

Portland, Ore., Feb. 14 (AP)—Three unions disputed today for recognition as bargaining agent of west coast Trailways bus drivers.

Two of them—the AFL Amalgamated Street, Electric Railway and Motor Coach employees and the independent Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen—asked yesterday for a national labor relations board election.

The present contract is now held by a third union, which is not relinquishing its claim, the AFL Miscellaneous Drivers, a Teamsters' union affiliate. The line has 47 regular and some extra drivers on the payroll. Its buses operate from Seattle to San Francisco.

If You Have Two Cows, You Can Figure These Definitions

Some political definitions from a bulletin issued by the Colorado department of agriculture:

Idealism: If you have two cows, you milk them both, use all the milk you need and have enough left for everyone else.

Socialism: If you have two cows, you keep one and give the other to your neighbor.

Communism: If you have two cows, you give both to the government; then the government gives you back some milk.

Imperialism: If you have two cows, you steal somebody's bull.

Soft-pink communism: If you have two cows, you are a capitalist.

Capitalism: If you have two cows, you sell one cow and buy a bull.

New Dealism: If you have two cows, the government shoots one cow, you milk the other cow, then throw part of the milk down the sink.

Anarchism: If you have two cows, your neighbor shoots one and takes the other.

Nazism: If you have two cows, the government shoots you and takes both cows.

Realism: If you have two cows, they're both dry.



Sears, Roebuck Employees Share in Pension Fund

Eighty-eight employees of the Salem Sears, Roebuck & Co. store today received the good news.

"It was contained in individual statements handed to them by Jim Mosolf, manager of the store, at an employees' meeting. The statements show the extent to which each of the 88 men and women staff members are sharing in the company's 1949 profits through their membership in 'The Saving and Profit Sharing Pension Fund of Sears, Roebuck & Co. Employees.'"

According to Manager Mosolf, the local employe group has to its credit in the fund 2976 shares of Sears stock plus a cash balance of \$33,302. Based on a year-end market value of \$44 1/2 per share for the Sears stock, this group now has a total investment worth \$163,024.

Mosolf said the fund was first established by Sears management in 1916, long before government social security, and before profit sharing plans were prevalent in American industry. The Sears fund now owns over 20 per cent of Sears stock and this ownership makes it the company's largest single stockholder.

The fund's total current assets now amount to \$267,328,000, based on a \$44 1/2 per share per year-end market value for Sears stock. However, in order to amass this value the fund's 102,458 members have deposited only \$46,700,000 out of their wages and salaries into the fund.

Mosolf explained that all regular Sears employes are eligible to join the fund after one year of service, and that the purpose of the fund is not only to permit employes to share in the company's profits, but also to assist them in creating a financial reserve which will help take care of their financial needs after their eventual retirement from business.

Employe members of the fund deposit 5 percent of their salaries into their individual accounts each year, with the maximum deposit limited to \$250 annually. Sears each year places in the fund an established percentage of its profits. This sum is credited to the employe-members on a length-of-service basis.

Crude oil is a base for more than 1,200 useful products including medicines, dyes, cosmetics, preservatives, rayon, nylon, alcohol, rubber, plastics, paints, solvents, insecticides besides fuel, lubricants and paving material.

Says Hoover Report Ignored by Demos

Washington, Feb. 14 (AP)—Rep. Norblad (R., Ore.) accused the administration last night of playing politics with the Hoover report.

He asserted in a radio broadcast (Mutual) that the administration was ignoring recommendations of the Hoover commission.

"In my opinion neither the president nor his leaders want the report with its accompanying great savings put on the statute books for the simple reason that too many people on the federal payroll who vote the right way would be out of a job," he said.

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Truman Program Branded Socialistic

Seattle, Feb. 14 (AP)—A Kansas republican senator described President Truman's program last night as "plain and simple socialism, which, after all, is just the halfway house on the road to communism."

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VALENTINE PRESENTS

New York Girls Hope Boys Will Bring Diamonds, Mink

By BARBARA BUNDSCHU

New York, Feb. 14 (AP)—The girls are hoping the boys will come calling tonight with Valentines like diamonds and mink and tickets to "South Pacific."

"They'll be lucky, the boys confided, if they get a little sentiment and hearts and/or flowers.

An unsentimental survey of assorted people hinted, in fact, that a girl might dine happy on hamburger if her guy just remembers the date. But that didn't stop their wishing.

"I'd like a good, expensive diamond with a nice little platinum band to go with it," said one forthright, young, unmarried woman.

A middle-aged widow said she wanted her diamonds set in a cross to wear on a necklace.

"Oh, dear," wailed Arthur Treacher, "when is it?"

Nine out of 10 men asked the same question.

Reminded, the boys promised they remember their wives and sweethearts with gifts that ranged in rather limited fashion between "nothing" and "half a dozen golf balls, maybe."

In between were candy and flowers and flowers and candy—and Treacher.

The "perfect butler" of the movies, now playing the "perfect slave" on Broadway, will send his Mrs. in California a presumably perfect check, complete with sentiments romantic.

Mrs. Treacher is a lucky woman.

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"I might take some girl some candy or flowers or something," one unattached young man said.

"Or I might just stay home that night."

One girl said she really did want flowers. No girl wanted candy.

Mink ran about neckpiece to necklace with the diamonds. After that the girls picked charms for their charm bracelets—gold, that is.

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Helen Callahan
86 Parker Ave., San Francisco, Calif.

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