

Twice-Told White House Tale Retold

John Adams Hung Clothes On Limb, Swam in Potomac

By BAUKHAGE
News Analyst and Commentator.

WASHINGTON.—At a recent press and radio conference, one of the reporters ribbed the President about the balcony he was building on the White House, which the Washington fine arts commission objects to as destroying the architectural beauty of the building.

Someone suggested he might conduct a "back porch" political campaign from it. Mr. Truman came right back with the remark that it was a front porch. That, in a sense, is correct, for the southern facade of the White House originally was intended as the front of the building.

Of late, the President has been given to historical anecdotes—he's



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a great student of American history — and this time he told us a story which I have heard before from presidential lips anent the White House "front yard" of other days. In the time of President Adams, the story goes, a canal skittered the lowered edge of the grounds, and that gentleman

was fond of slipping down to its banks for a swim as natural in the early morning hours.

There was, in those days, said Mr. Truman, a certain female journalist who had been unable to get an interview with the President. So she slipped down to the canal bank at dawn, waited until he was immersed, then sat on his clothes and stayed there until he answered her questions, decently draped in the waters.

I repeated the story on the air as Mr. Truman told it, and in the next day's mail received a letter from Mr. Daniel J. Kelly Jr., of South Bend, Ind., who is a collector of early historical newspapers.

Wrote Mr. Kelly: "I enjoyed your reference in a recent broadcast to the newspaper woman who sat on President Adams' clothes until he agreed to give her an interview."

"The President Adams was John Quincy Adams, and the woman newspaper reporter was Anne Royall. However, the story does not conform to the facts, and you might mention this to President Truman the next time the story is brought up."

"John Quincy Adams was an ardent and accomplished swimmer and he enjoyed a daily plunge into the Potomac even while President. He was also an ardent diarist, and his diary contains many a mention of his dips in the river."

"Anne Royall was Adams' Washington contemporary — a vicious writer and a malevolent journalist. In 1829 she was convicted of being a 'common scold.' Her first contact with Adams was in 1824 when she called at the White House to demand a pension as a Revolutionary war widow. Adams mentioned her in a very uncomplimentary manner in his diary."

"According to Adams' diary . . . 'She continues to make herself noxious to many persons; tolerated by some and feared by others, by her deportment and her books; treating all with a familiarity which often passes for impudence, insulting those who treat her with incivility, and then lampooning them in her books. Stripped of all her sex's delicacy, but unable to forfeit its privilege of gentle treatment to others, she goes about like a virago in enchanted armor, and redeems herself from the ravings of indulgence by the notoriety of her eccentricities and the forced currency they give her publications . . .'"

"Although Adams chronicled all unusual incidents while swimming, and had referred to Mrs. Royall in his diary, he makes no mention of the supposed meeting of this woman while swimming."

"While Adams lived in the White House, Mrs. Royall was a resident of Washington, but travelled about most of the time. She was known as an author at that time, but not as a newspaper woman. Her journalistic career began two years after Adams retired as President. In 1831 she established a newspaper aptly named 'Paul Pry,' and later she founded another small newspaper, the 'Huntress.' It does not seem possible that Anne Royall could have interviewed President Adams, at least in her capacity as a journalist."

"Adams was mentioned in 'Paul Pry' just once, on July 28, 1832. There are references to him in the August 1, 1840; August 20, 1842; December 14, 1844; February 6, 1847, and the March 4, 1848, issues of the 'Huntress.' Mrs. Royall also mentioned Adams in her 'Sketches,' p. 166, and in her 'Black Book,' p. 126. But nowhere did the woman who was supposed to have been involved in the Potomac shore incident ever refer to any interview with John Quincy Adams."

"The supposed incident still makes a good story, and especially, I suppose, when newspaper men are interviewing the President, and when news is somewhat dull. However, I cannot believe that any of the known facts can justify the truth of this old story."

But, I insist, it's a good story and I, for one, will not disillusion any President as to its authenticity.



FRIEND IN NEED . . . Kathleen Brandt, 11, of Washington, D. C., won herself a staunch and feathered friend in this wild pigeon after "un-freezing" it when she found the bird frozen in a snowbank near her home. Now her constant companion, it sits on her shoulder, takes food from her mouth.

NEWS REVIEW

South Threatens Split; Self Rationing Proposed

President Truman, who seems to run to 10-point programs, tossed another one to congress—concerning the preservation and protection of civil rights—and then stood aside to await the explosion.

It came quickly. Southern Democrats, hopping mad over at least four of the 10 controversial points, began to talk seriously of calling a Dixie convention to split away from Mr. Truman on the civil rights issue.

Focus of the current disunity was a bill, up for approval by the senate labor committee, to create a national commission against job discrimination on grounds of race, creed or color.

Sen. Allen J. Ellender (Dem., La.) predicted that if the bill were approved in its present form the party would erupt into open warfare. Both foes and backers of the measure agreed that it would be a close thing.

The four proposals that most inflamed the southerners were the ones calling for (1) a federal anti-lynching law, (2) a permanent fair employment practice commission, (3) an end to Jim Crow rules in transportation and (4) outlawing of state poll taxes.

Remainder of the points advocated by the President were: A permanent commission on civil rights, a joint congressional committee on civil rights, a civil rights division in the justice department; tightening of civil rights statutes; home rule for the District of Columbia; statehood for Alaska and Hawaii; equalization of naturalization opportunities, and settlement of evacuation claims of Japanese-Americans.

Because 1948 is an election year, and a presidential election year at that, the program, which otherwise might be ignored, was certain to get hot partisan debate.

In answer to Mr. Truman's firm statement that "something must be done" about the civil rights issue, southern Democrats replied that they were thinking of calling an all-southern convention to pick its own presidential candidate.

Some thought that too drastic a step, but at Jackson, Miss., Walter Sillers, speaker of the Mississippi house of representatives, said he flatly favored such a course in order to withhold at least part of the South's electoral votes from Mr. Truman.

SELF RATIONING:

Second Best

Manifestly stymied in its efforts to get congress to pass rationing and price control legislation, the administration tried a new approach in the form of an appeal for nationwide self-rationing.

Greater public support of an intensified drive for voluntary food conservation would have to be developed if living costs are to be curbed, the administration decided.

As an initial step representatives of 18 consumer, producer and distributor groups met with Clinton Anderson, secretary of agriculture, to map details of the nationwide program.

Charles F. Brannan, assistant secretary of agriculture, heads the new food saving setup. Originally started by the citizens' food committee last fall, it has been carried on until now under the direct leadership of the cabinet food committee.

Major emphasis, it was understood, would be placed on meat as the pivotal item in the cost of living merry-go-round; however, other foods also would be covered in the voluntary program. Based on specific recommendations of the food industry and public representatives, it is theoretically designed to meet the twin problem of scarce food supplies and high prices.

Biggest talking point the administration had in its attempts to solicit public support was the department of agriculture's somber prediction that the nation is heading for a serious meat shortage in the spring. And by way of emphasis Brannan added that meat rationing "by price" already is in effect because many people cannot afford to buy.

FOR SALE:

Some Eggs

U. S. government has hung out a "for sale" sign on 46.8 million dozen eggs that it bought last spring to support domestic prices.

There is one stipulation, however. Only foreign users will be allowed to buy them.

For the comfort of U. S. housewives the agriculture department was swift to point out that these eggs are not the kind that can be used readily for home consumption. They were shelled, dumped into huge containers and frozen before the government bought them in the first place.

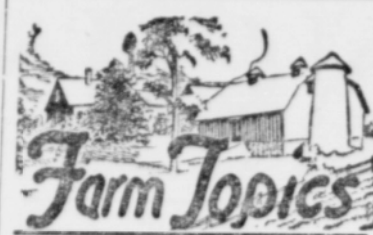
Agriculture department decided to sell the eggs to foreign buyers when it was unable to sell them to bakers and confectioners in this country because egg production has been going up and egg prices down.

HEADLINERS



IN WASHINGTON . . . Miss Nora Martins (above), daughter of Brazilian ambassador Carlos Martins, was declared Miss United Nations of 1948, proving that all diplomats are not necessarily old fuddies.

IN NEW YORK . . . Sam Yachter, a landlord, got tired of complaints about inadequate heat and hot water from his tenants, offered to give them his building, got no takers.



Proper Treatment Will Halt Termites

Tests Show Need for Protecting All Lumber

A visit to tropical Barro Colorado island in the Panama canal zone 21 years after a termite test building was erected to test effectiveness of coal-tar creosote and zinc chloride in protection of wood against ter-



Panama test house. This photo shows that treated wood had not been attacked by termites.

mites has shown that despite this "termites heaven," inhabited by some 45 different kinds, termites can be defeated by proper wood treatment.

This will be good news to farmers and home owners who see their wood foundations, walls and floors fall away before the onslaughts of the wood destroying "disease."

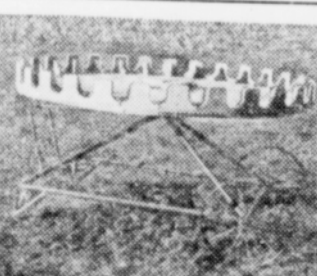
After 21 years the impregnated wood was sound, but a cot of untreated wood left in the house was riddled by termites.

This would seem to indicate that in building a house or farm building, all lumber, including the shingles, should be treated as well as the fence posts. It was found that when the termites found no edible wood, that is untreated wood, that they soon moved to new territory.

Tests have shown that soil-poisoning, although beneficial, is less permanent and should be resorted to only where structural control methods are impractical, or in addition to them.

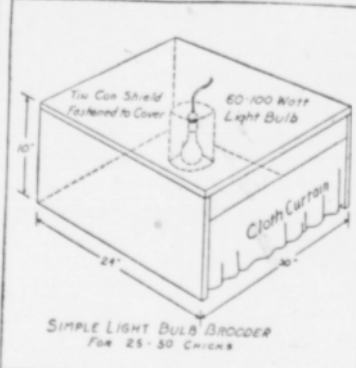
Another aid is to discourage termite activity by adequate drainage, ample ventilation and removal of wood debris.

Bunching Vegetables



Bunching vegetables for retail sales takes a lot of work when the produce must be taken to a packing shed. The tying wheel designed by Alfred F. Foots can be taken into the field and moved from place to place. The notched rim of the wooden top holds a standard bunch of broccoli while it is being tied. The pipe frame is welded to the wheel spindles, and the whole machine can be handled like a wheelbarrow.

Light Bulb Brooder



It is possible to construct an electric brooder for baby chicks at little cost. Box lumber, wall-board or similar material may be used. The globe is protected by a tin can. For the curtains, burlap may be used. The burlap or cloth should be cut three or four inches high about every two inches.

Flies Resistant to DDT Developed by Scientists

A strain of DDT-resistant houseflies, requiring nearly twice as much of the chemical to kill them as ordinary flies, has been developed by the USDA. The possible future development of DDT-resistant houseflies in nature is of considerable importance to public health. The problem depends somewhat on how long it may take for wild flies to develop such resistance. This would complicate control.

Restoring Williamsburg Cost 35 Million, 30 Years

The greatest undertaking of its kind in history is the restoration of Williamsburg, Va., which was started back in 1927 and will not be completed until 1957 at the cost of some \$35,000,000, says Collier's. The project comprises the razing of 600 buildings erected after the year 1800 and the restoring of nearly 400 colonial houses, shops, schools, churches and taverns. Although unfinished, the town is now attracting 500,000 tourists annually who come to see it and its 4,000 inhabitants living and working in the environment that prevailed there in the 18th century.



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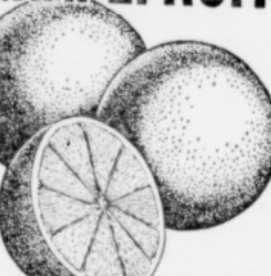
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The Tithe That Binds

Coming away from a debate on taxes I couldn't help feeling that the discussion, scholarly as it had appeared at points, and ringing with altruism at others, had offered a political potion, only slightly flavored with any essence of economics. How willing is congress to depart from the past, if such a departure affects political futures?

Pondering this, I came upon a dispatch in the London Daily Herald from Romney Marsh, Kent. It recounted how, in the lamp-lit sitting room of a six-century-old farm, a 72-year-old farmer, Archibald Edwin Waddell, complained to a reporter that he was about to be thrown into bankruptcy because he refused to pay 75 pounds and 3 shillings—some \$300—in "tithes."

"I shall probably die muttering," Waddell said, "against this wicked, anti-social custom."

For previous refusals to pay tithes, there had been four seizures from his farm: bullocks, sheep, pigs, farm implements, furniture, his clothing and his cart-horse.

"My father," the old man concluded, "who farmed for 70 years in Kent, paid 1,400 pounds in tithes, and two of my brothers were forced to emigrate. I am fighting against a rope that has tightened around my neck, and around the necks of so many others who love the soil."

Few people realize that tithing, payment of one-tenth of the product of the land, a custom which comes down from feudal days when it was collected by the parish priests, and later the Church of England, is so modern, and that its effect will be felt until the year 1996.

Originally the tithe was paid in produce, but in 1836 it became a fixed rent still paid to the church. In 1925, the law was changed to make the tithe payable into what was called "Queen Anne's Bounty," a fund used for general church purposes.

poses. In 1936 tithing itself was abolished but the law provided that over a period of 60 years a sum should be paid yearly until the amount considered the tithe redemption fund to be the capital of the tithe on a given piece of property, had been reached.

That is what Farmer Waddell objects to. But he'll pay or get out, and he will never live to see the day when he doesn't have to support the church against his will.

Romania chose to change its royal purple to pure red when it bounced King Michael. But how nice, nobody can tell him he can't have "the woman I love."

A dentist now reports that he has successfully transplanted wisdom teeth in cavities left by missing molars. But did he transplant the wisdom?

JOURNEY TO THE MOON

Get Your Rockets Tuned Up

Science has advanced to the point where, when you talk about taking a trip to the moon, people no longer look sorrowfully upon you as one who has been affected by the fabled light from that lunar orb.

An actual journey to the moon may become a reality sooner than one would have expected five years ago. Right now, in several parts of the world, there are small groups of earnest experts who are quite serious about the prospects of travel between the planets.

One of those organizations is the British Interplanetary society, a group of about 450 members nearly one-third of whom are rocket and supersonic research scientists. Another third is made up of mechanical and electrical engineers, radio and radar technicians.

Many researchers working on military rocket-powered weapons believe that their work on rockets can be just as important for a peaceful future as it might be for war. From the aspect of motive power they know that by the time they can send a rocket halfway around the world they are likely to be within easy reach of the next phase—interplanetary travel.

That time may not be very far distant. Present velocity of a V-2 type rocket is about two miles a second. The velocity required to send one to the most distant spot on this globe is about five miles a second; and the estimated velocity needed to get a rocket out of the earth's gravitational pull is seven miles a second.

But actual travel in space is still a secondary consideration. After man has succeeded in shaking off earth's gravity pull with his rockets, the first thing he will do is to shoot a load of scientific instruments into space.

The visionary scientist sees himself sending instruments to the moon or to Mars. Or arranging it so that part of his rocket would become a satellite to one of the planets. Thus, through a development of television, he might see such things as the secrets of the dark side of the moon.

A wealth of research—literally out of this world—would be opened up long before an attempt could be made to begin human interplanetary travel.