

ORIGIN OF MAIL CAR

Railway Postal Service First Operated in Missouri.

William A. Davis, Before the War, Postmaster at St. Joseph, Devised System Now in Vogue for Distributing Mail En Route.

St. Joseph, Mo.—Progress in the carrying and distribution of United States mails has been remarkable in this country in the last fifty years. A half century ago, the first railroad west of the Mississippi river, from Hannibal to St. Joseph, Mo., was constructed, and on this road the railway mail service of the country had its origin and inception. Then, only the mails for the whole western country came in bulk on freight and passenger trains to be distributed in ton lots and carried to many destinations by courier, by buckboard, horseback and stage lines, the only methods in those days.

It remained for William A. Davis, postmaster at St. Joseph from 1855 to 1861, to invent and inaugurate the great system now in vogue. Before this time the mails, all mixed and in bulk, were carried to some central distributing point. Independence, Mo., was one of these and St. Joseph later was another. When the railroad was built the task all came to the St. Joseph office, in distributing the entire overland mail.

The idea occurred to Mr. Davis that these mails could be distributed while in transit. It seemed to him in every way possible and desirable. So he wrote to the people in Washington for authority to fit up some cars on the Hannibal & St. Joseph railroad to try out the experiment. The authority came and Mr. Davis went to the railway headquarters at Hannibal and superintended the arrangement of several way cars with pigeon holes, doors, windows and other conveniences and



William A. Davis.

the initial run with a carload of mail was made from Hannibal to St. Joseph in record time, the mails properly distributed and ready for the overland stages, couriers, etc.

The first trial was so satisfactory that other cars were brought into requisition and soon a most remarkable change for the better was made in the receipt and distribution of mails. The great railway mail service had been inaugurated!

The problem of forwarding overland mails without delay was solved, and Mr. Davis was soon made a special agent of the department and given full charge of the branch of the service which he had originated.

William A. Davis, inventor of the railway mail service, was born in Barren County, Kentucky, in September, 1809. In early youth he went to Vir-

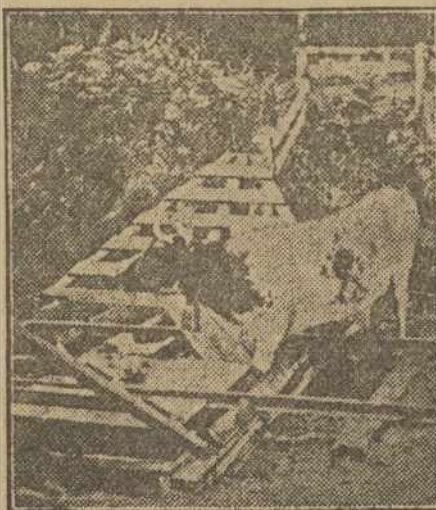
ginia, where he entered the postal service, at Richmond and other places, and with his career in St. Joseph he had been in the postal service about fifty years.

The first car for the distribution of the mails was an old-time "way" car, fitted up with pigeon holes. Extra windows were arranged and the "distributors" used candles to assist in lighting the cars. Mr. Davis made a trip on the first car as far as Palmyra, Mo., and then left the work with an assistant while he returned to Hannibal for the second car. There are many old railroaders yet alive who remember the first mail cars.

CATTLE GUARD IS EFFECTIVE

Novel Device Prevents Cow From Wandering on Rails and Meeting Injury.

Chicago.—The old story about someone asking George Stephenson, the inventor of the locomotive, what would happen to a train if a cow wandered on the line, to which the latter replied he would "be very sorry for the cow," seems to have found a sympathetic echo in the western states in the form of a novel cattle guard on railways, the practical utility of which is demonstrated in the illustration. The device claims to effectually prevent cattle straying up the railway line and thus meeting with injury or death from oncoming trains. As the cow walks along the track she meets a tilting platform between the rails which tips up as she steps upon it. The cow, imagining her progress to be barred and not endowed by nature with a superabundance of intelligence



Novel Cattle Guard.

—a fact which the wily inventor must have borne in mind—instead of walking round the obstruction proceeds to compliment the exceeding ingenuity and foresight of its originator by walking off the line altogether.

SAUERKRAUT LONGEVITY AID

Rev. Flynn of California Makes Some Peppery Remarks on Diet and Fat—Two Meals Enough.

Cincinnati.—"Any man who is so fat that he cannot see his feet while walking, ought to be arrested," said the Rev. Earl Flynn of Berkeley, Cal., to a Y. M. C. A. audience the other day. "Two meals a day are enough for the average person to eat and remain in a healthy condition. The person who eats three meals a day needs 12 hours sleep to refresh himself."

Mr. Flynn, who is 75 years old, continued:

"The food which collects the longevity germ is sauerkraut. The man or woman who keeps on a diet of this kind, ought to live a century or more. Sauerkraut is very nutritious and should be on the table of everybody."

Continuing his health talk, Mr. Flynn wound up with saying: "To be healthy every minister must sweat twice a week. A good many ministers only sweat once a month, when they draw their salaries."

No Blasphemy in Japan.

Blasphemy in Japan is another rude disillusionment for the credulous traveler. Prof. B. H. Chamberlain, in his "Things Japanese," remarks: "The Japanese vocabulary, though extraordinarily rich and constantly growing, is honorably deficient in terms of abuse. It affords absolutely no means of cursing and swearing."

An Extraordinary Family.

"Lord Brokeleigh comes of an extraordinary family." "I have never heard of any member of it who was an eminent statesman or a great soldier." "No, but there is no record that anyone belonging to the house of Brokeleigh ever married a cory-phaea."

The Exact Spot.

Teacher—"Robert, where are the Rocky mountains?" Robert—"In the geography, teacher; page four!"—Puck.

Pay Out Much Money.

The British imports of carbons for electric lights amount to nearly fifty millions a year.

SOME QUEER TRADES

Unusual Occupations Revealed in Census Report.

Kansas City Man Who Bottles Smoke—Unique Task Performed by Government Employees in Washington—Raise Frogs for Profit.

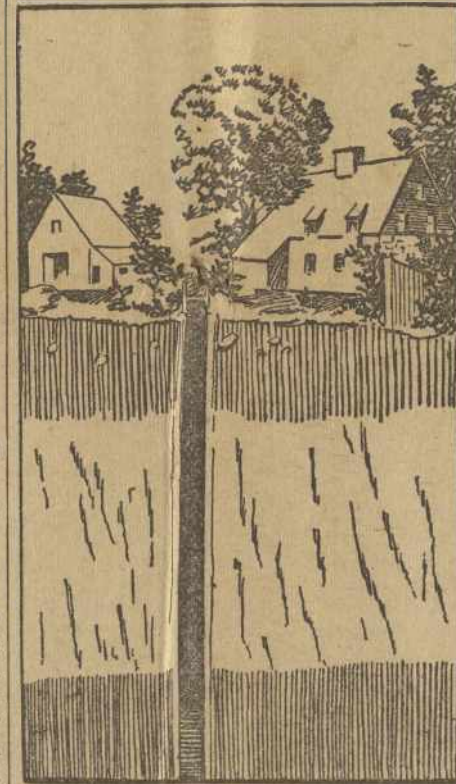
Washington.—As a part of the task of compiling the thirteenth census of the United States, the bureau will publish a report on the various occupations by which men and women in this country earn their daily bread. Though it will be many months before this report will be given to the public, a conservative estimate places the number of classifications of industry at between 7,000 and 8,000.

It seems a safe prediction to state that there will be found but one man in the entire country making a living from bottling the smoke of burning hickory wood. This man, who lives in Kansas City, contends that his bottled smoke, let loose in an air tight compartment in which meat has been placed, will produce the same effect upon the meat as though cured by hickory smoke in the usual manner.

Nor would the uninitiated expect to find profit in raising bullfrogs for their legs. Two New Jersey women, however, are making a good livelihood by so doing and a certain California woman obtains over \$100 an ounce wholesale for the seeds of petunias.

In some of the reports of the census enumerators in the field are found tabulations so unusual that they require no end of labor in properly classifying them at the bureau. One man frankly asserted that he was a "booze fighter," and another, who works in a saloon, styled himself as a "destroyer of men."

Such occupations as "pouncer," in a hat factory; "tobies," a maker of stogies; "whittler," in a straw works; "dock walloper," a longshoreman; "vibrator," in a clock factory; "tonger," in connection with oysters; "teaser," in a glass factory; "scabber," in quarry-



Shows Danger in Digging Wells.

ing; "flosser," in a corset factory, and "dubber," in ship building, are all unusual occupations that must be listed.

In Washington especially are there a large number of persons who earn their living by performing unusual tasks. The majority of them are employed by the government. There is a young man in the National museum—Henry Hendley—who is known as the official portrait-bust maker of Indian features for a unique portrait gallery of the North American redskins.

I. B. Millner is an expert modeler in papier mache of things past, present

DIAMONDS FOUND IN CANADA

Those Discovered Thus Far Are Quite Small, but Further Search May Reveal Larger Ones.

New York.—The first definite announcement of the finding of diamonds in places in Canada has just been made by R. W. Brock, the director of the Canadian geological survey. Mr. Brock states that diamonds have been discovered in peridotite rock on the Olivine mountain, near the Tulameen river, British Columbia.

Samples of the rock collected by Charles Camsell of the survey were sent to Ottawa for analysis and were found to contain insoluble fragments of crystals which on being subjected to series of tests were pronounced to be genuine diamonds. They were all, however, of small size, none being larger than the head of a pin.

The discovery for this reason is not regarded as of much commercial importance. It is believed possible, though not very likely, that further search will result in finding larger stones.

and future for the National museum.

Along similar lines is the work of Edwin Howell, a maker of maps. In his workshop he evolves relief maps of certain sections of the country which not only indicate rivers and mountains and towns, but all the minerals, rocks, flowers, trees, and varying soils to be found there.

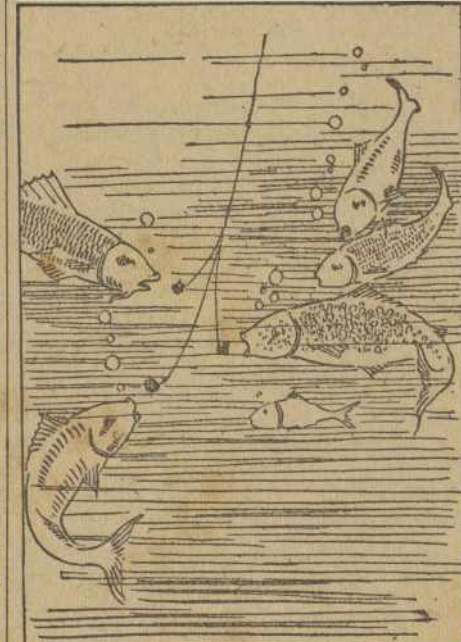
One of the most interesting of his maps was made for the marine hospital and public health service. It is intended as a warning against allowing people ignorant of geological conditions to dig wells, and as a plea for the artesian well.

There are expert tea and coffee tasters in the treasury department who tell the value and grades of these commodities by placing a few grains on the tongue. And in the department of agriculture there is a squad of young men who eat drugged foods to determine just how poisonous they are.

IS FRIEND OF FISHERMAN

Humble Silkworm Furnishes Cat-Gut Much Used by Disciples of Isaak Walton.

Rome, Italy.—It is doubtful whether the average rod and reel fisherman who angles with flies and hooks strung with fine translucent cat-gut is aware



Resists Their Fiercest Struggles.

of the invaluable friend he has in the humble silkworm. The cat-gut is the most unbreakable substance that holds the hooks against the fiercest struggles of the struck fish and comes from silkworms. The principal center of the manufacture of this kind of cat-gut is the island of Procida, in the Bay of Naples, but most of the silkworms employed are raised near Torre Annunziata, at the foot of Vesuvius. The caterpillars are killed just as they are about to begin the spinning of cocoons, the silk glands are removed and subjected to a process of pickling, which is a secret of the trade, and afterward the threads are carefully drawn out by skilled workers, mostly women. The length of the thread varies from a foot to nearly twenty inches.

One in 275 Is Insane.

New York.—One out of every 275 persons in New York city is insane, according to Dr. Albert W. Ferris, president of the state lunacy commission, who is delivering a course of lectures before the New York School of Philanthropy. The state hospitals for the insane now house 32,000 patients, and private institutions care for 11,000 more. New cases admitted to the state asylums average about 150 a week. The cost of caring for an insane patient is approximately \$200 a year.

Noted Inns to Go.

New York.—Two of New York city's famous hotels—the Hoffman house and the Gilsey house—will close their doors immediately. The Gilsey house will be converted to business purposes. Both hotels in their day have had the names of many men of national prominence upon their registers.

Stuff Rabbits With Quail.

Topeka, Kan.—Stuffing cleaned rabbits with quail and shipping them out of the state has enabled many hunters to evade the quail-shooting law in Kansas this season. Prof. L. L. Dyche, state fish and game warden, who has just obtained proof of the violations, said warrants probably would be sworn out for the hunters.

The Dog and the Flea.

Dog fanciers realize the difficulty of separating the animals from the fleas which often inhabit them. Few of the older methods are entirely satisfactory, but a Chicago electrical man is authority for the statement that the use of the vacuum cleaner is most efficacious.

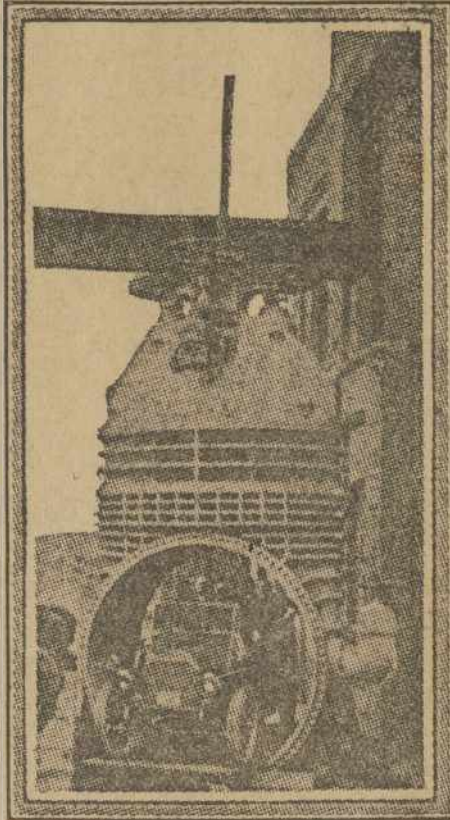
Must Ever Be Before Us.

But, were all its representations of objects, deeds and men, which are out of the range of our sights, obliterated, the most of the globe and its history would no more exist to our material senses than the scenery and affairs of other planets.

LARGEST VALVE IN WORLD

Automobile Driven Through Opening of Monster Device at Niagara Falls.

Niagara Falls, N. Y.—One of the largest valves in the world has just been installed in a power plant on the Canadian side of Niagara Falls. This monster affair weighs nine tons and was made for controlling one of three 12,000 horsepower turbines. The valve is thirty feet high and has a nine-foot opening through which, as seen in our illustration, an automobile was driven



Largest Valve in World.

just before the valve was ready for installation. The valve will withstand a pressure of over 550,000 pounds. The valve-gate will be moved by a low geared fifteen horse power motor.

TO REVIVE "BARREN" ISLAND

Paper Mills Are to Make Use of Great Pulp Supply—Menier's Investment Is Justified.

Boston.—The island described in the encyclopedia as "barren," which divides the Gulf of St. Lawrence in two channels is about to add a new chapter to its strange, romantic history. Sieur Joliet was its first owner and ruler. It cost him nothing and he did nothing with it, and successive ownerships found and left little but records of expenditures and failure. In 1896 the island was purchased from a British syndicate by Henri Menier, a French manufacturer of chocolate, for \$160,000.

Anticosti is densely wooded. The great paper mills on this side of the boundary are "in the market" for an almost unlimited quantity of pulp wood. Beginning this spring a mill already in operation will be providing this commodity in exportable form, as "rosesey" or barked wood, probably to the amount of 30,000 cords during the shipping season. Thus M. Menier's investment finds its abundant justification.

Inks Fish to Sell Them.

South Norwalk, Conn.—A youthful genius of this town has sold several hundred pounds of frost fish to housekeepers as trout. The frost fish had been decorated with red ink to make them look like trout. As frost fish they were worth less than 8 cents a pound, but as trout they sold for 25 to 35 cents a pound.

Ely to Be Aviation Instructor.

San Francisco.—The coast artillery corps, National Guard of California, has completed arrangements for Eugene Ely, the aviator, to act as instructor for the aviation squad. This is said to be the first aviation squad organized by a militia corps.

Youth and Happiness.

Make youth the most attractive period possible—crowd every pleasure and bit of sunshine imaginable into that day for the sorrows will enter all too soon—but in doing so watch the recipient of your favors and sacrifices that he or she does not develop into a selfish boy or girl.

Queensland's Sheep Queen.

E. Jowette, one of Queensland's best-known squatters, has about ten sheep stations in Queensland, and shears over 1,000,000 sheep. On one of the stations, Kynuna, he shears 200,000, and he has just bought two other sheep stations.—London Standard.

Ends the Discussion.

And then shrieks one, "Who wants a husband who marries to escape paying a bachelor tax?" Peace, woman, peace. They have decided to pay.—New York Telegram.

Farming Annoyance.

One of Abe Martin's sayings was this: "The hardest thing a farmer does, next to plowin', is givin' half the road to a touring car."

GEESE ON THE STAGE REBEL

Object to Understudy for Singer in Halle Performance of Humperdinck's "Konigskinder."

Berlin.—An amusing incident occurred this week at a performance of Humperdinck's "Konigskinder" at the Halle opera house.

Live geese are employed for the Halle production in contrast to the papier mache variety which indulge in make believe cackles at Berlin. The prima donna who regularly sings the part of the goose maid was taken ill suddenly and it became necessary to obtain an understudy. When the latter, however, went on the stage the geese rebelled against the intrusion of a stranger. They became so enraged they threatened to do the singer bodily injury.

The conductor of the orchestra had to stop the performance until the geese could be quelled. They refused to subside until the familiar figures of the wood chopper and the broom maker came upon the scene.