

Plague of Shaving Traced Back Long Before Christ

Washington — From Stone-Age to electric models, razors in one form or another have helped man cope with what Byron once called the "daily plague" of shaving.

An iron razor, found recently in excavating a prehistoric lake dwelling near Boyle, Eire, has been dated by archeologists at 600 B.C. But the owner of even this early tool was no pioneer at chin scraping.

At least 2,500 years before, people of Mesopotamia devised an efficient knifelike shaver with slate handle and a blade of obsidian, or volcanic glass. Holder and blade were soldered together with dried pitch.

Primitives Still Pull
Through the ages, razors have been made of just about any hard, sharp substance that came to hand, including bits of flint, shell fragments and sharks' teeth. Such primitive materials are still used by a few remote peoples from South Pacific isles to mid-Africa. Some even carry on the heroic practice of plucking out whiskers one by one.

Bronze razors were fashioned by several ancient civilizations. They were buried with their owners in Egyptian tombs nearly 4,000 years ago. With them have been found small quartzite whetstones used to hone the easily dulled edges.

Razors owned by the wealthy were often decorated with intricate drawings or attached to handles of gold, silver or other precious materials. From graves at the site of Carthage have come hatchet-shaped, bronze razors engraved with Egyptian style gods and people.

Today, simplicity and utility mark the shaving tools of the world's predominantly clean-shaven populations. But lack of ornamentation is more than made up in quantity. In the United States alone, razor manufacturers consume some 5,500 tons of steel each year.

Basic Forms Unchanged
Before the 20th-century development of the now prevalent safety and electric types of razors, shaving implements varied surprisingly little in basic form.

An unusual style used in Rome about 500 B.C., was a flat metal disk cut out on one side like a fat half-moon. It was held by a tiny knoblike handle at the bottom curve.

For the most part, however, the straight razor—in one or two pieces, or with folding handle like a pocketknife—was long the favorite model. Variations were in degree rather than kind, with long or short blades, rounded cutting edges or right-angle hatchet corners.

A few years ago, seven different kinds of primitive razors, dated between 500 and 1,000 B.C., were taken from the bed of the Thames river, where it flows past London. All resembled the modern straight razor.

Played Clean-Cut Role
However shaped, razors have frequently played a clean-cut role in history. Alexander the Great ordered his soldiers to shave off their beards lest the enemy turn the long whiskers to advantage in hand-to-hand fighting. Russia's Czar Peter I not only put a tax on beards but threatened defiant wearers with forcible shaving by blunt instruments.

Although the Biblical patriarchs wore and respected beards many Bible references tell of shaving in connection with cleansing and other rituals. The Egyptians particularly liked their heads and faces to be shaven, and ridiculed long-haired and bearded Greeks.

According to the historian Pliny, Scipio Africanus, the famous general of Rome's campaigns against Carthage in the third century B.C., was the first Roman to be stricken with Byron's "plague" of the daily shave.

FOR NERVOUS DOGS

Chicago—(U.P.)—A report in the Journal of American Veterinary Medical Association says a drug has been found to calm dogs that get upset by unusual noises. The article says that the drug rauwolfia serpentina, has been used successfully on dogs showing a morbid fear of noises. It adds that there appear to be no objectionable or troublesome side effects from using the drug.



WORTH MORE THAN 10,000 WORDS—Home after a year's tour of duty in Germany, Pfc. Aime Paradis of Manchester, N. H., gets a warm welcome from his wife, Pauline, who met him on Brooklyn dock when his troopship arrived.

A Nichol's Worth of ... Comment On This and That

By HARMAN W. NICHOLS
United Press Feature Writer

Washington — (U.P.) — What's new in Washington:

One of the Senate-House conferees on the farm bill called the sessions a "floating crap game."

"The whole thing is a gamble," he reports. "The committee meets in a different room every morning, afternoon and night."

Leonard Hall and Paul Butler, chairmen respectively of the Republican and Democratic national committees, were at each other hot and heavy on the Philadelphia Bulletin's forum.

They dropped their hatchets flying back to Washington on a private plane. Kidded back and forth. Congratulated each other for "putting the show on the road," and played a game of gin rummy.

Plus-four knickers are coming back. They sell for \$25 a pair. No pleats. Legs trimmer. More seat room. Fine gear all around. Better golf, maybe.

A young man called on a wheel on the hill. He said he was about to graduate from college and wanted to know how he could become a lobbyist.

The man had to tell the lad that the climb up to that point isn't easy. First, you have to work with a registered lobbyist as a researcher, or become an office assistant. But most important, you have to know most everybody in Washington. That isn't easy. Some are hard to get to.

Poor Eyesight Said High Injury Factor

Philadelphia—(U.P.)—Poor eyesight is the leading factor in the high injury rate among "do-it-yourself" enthusiasts, according to Dr. Milton Eger, president of the Vision Conservation Institute of Pennsylvania, Inc.

Citing National Safety Council statistics, Eger said: "When a man saws his finger it usually involves poor judgment of the distance and dimensions of the material at hand—poor depth perception."

According to Eger, vision adequate to read a newspaper may be inadequate and unsafe for tasks requiring hand and eye coordination.

In addition to correction of vision, Dr. Eger recommended that "do-it-yourself" fans adopt safety glasses for protection against flying chips.

Spokane—(U.P.)—Sen. Estes Kefauver (D-Tenn.) has accepted an invitation to speak here at the Pacific Northwest Home Builders convention.

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Office Equipment Interest Said High

Philadelphia — (U.P.) — Interest in new office equipment and office machines is at one of the highest levels in history, according to a survey conducted by the National Office Management association.

The association said that new equipment is the top item of interest for office executives today. One firm reported that it

expected to purchase \$10,000,000 worth of equipment this year. Average expenditure is expected to be \$28,400.

Adding and calculating machines, typewriters, furniture and filing equipment headed the list of items of interest.

Accounting and tabulating machines, addressing machines, dictating and duplicating equipment followed closely.

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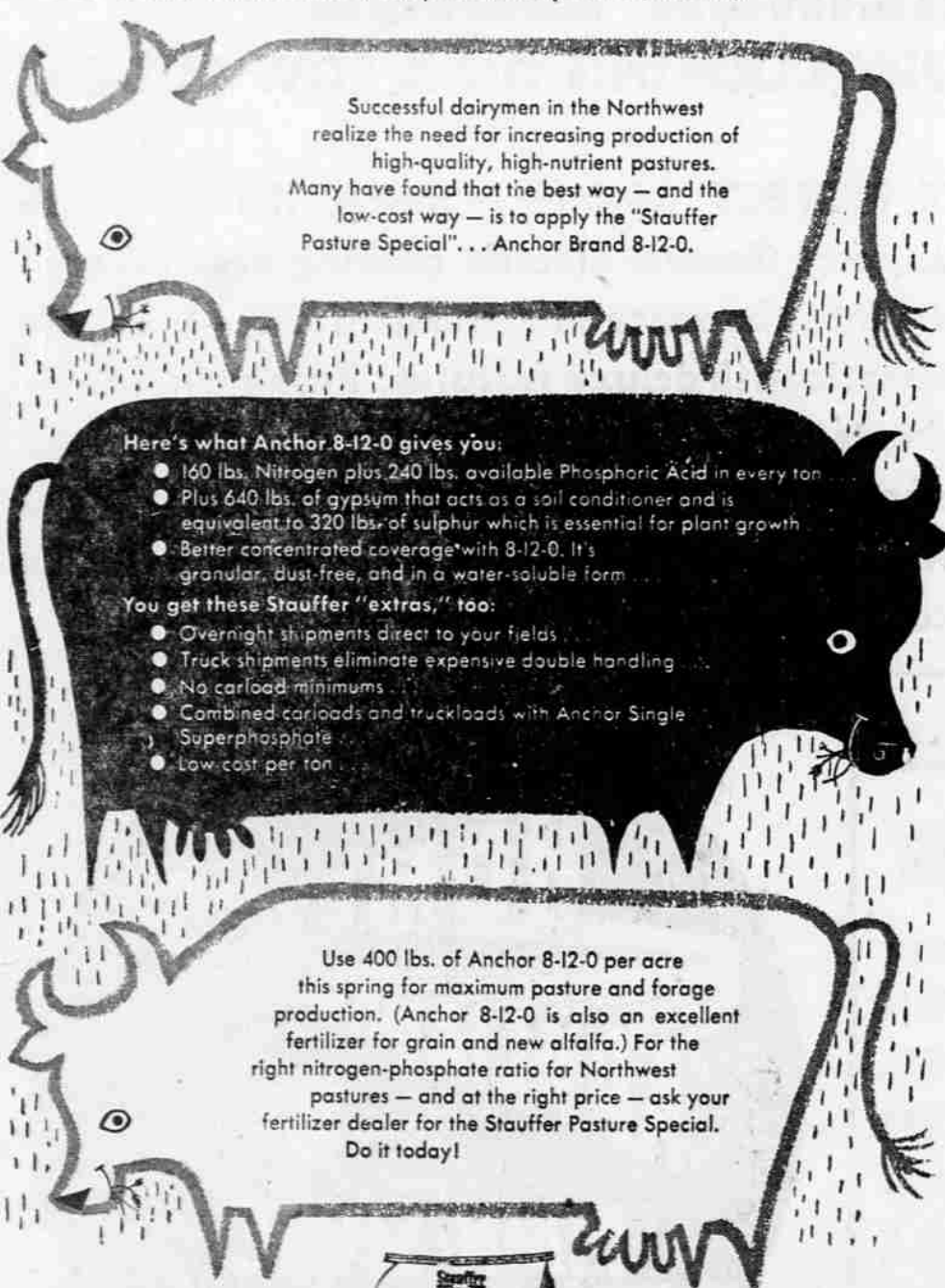
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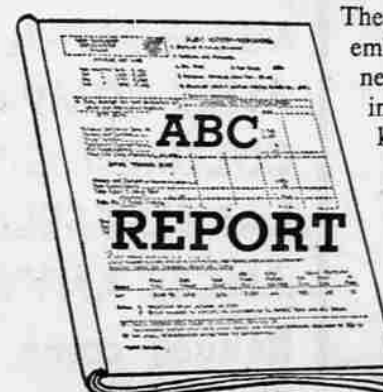
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