

Repairman Starts Move for Labels in Shoes



DEPENDABLE TRANSPORTATION—Wilbur Gardner, above, who has operated Gardner's Shoe Repair shop at 612 East Main st., Medford, for the last 27 years, figures he gets the exercise he needs by riding a bicycle to work every morning. He estimates he has traveled 45,000 miles by leg power during that time. Gardner's present bicycle is equipped with an electric generator, rear-view mirror, bell and turn signals, which he rigged up himself. On his own initiative, Gardner about six months ago began a one-man campaign to get federal laws passed to require manufacturers to label shoes as to what materials are used in their construction.

Gardner Receives Support of Many Officials in Move

By BOB VROMAN
Mail Tribune Staff Writer

Wilbur Gardner, who operates Gardner's Repair shop at 612 East Main st., Medford, is not by nature a trouble-maker. For 27 years he has been content to work in his little shop, hammering sewing away at the job of repairing shoes for Medford's citizens.

While he has known for some time that people were not always getting their money's worth when they bought a pair of shoes, he never figured he could do anything about it—at least not until one day about six months ago when he suddenly got "fed up" and decided to take matters in his own hands.

Pair after pair of children's shoes that were being brought into his shop didn't have enough solid leather anywhere to make a repair. They were paper from one end to the other, which was all covered up with a veneer of leather and probably cost the buyer from \$8 to \$10.

Public Duped
Gardner reasoned that if clothing, bedding, food stuffs and other commodities had to be labeled as to their contents or construction, why not shoes? He figured that the public is being "duped" by not having laws to compel manufacturers to label shoes as to what materials are used in their construction.

The first thing Gardner did was to correspond with congressmen in Washington, D. C., to stir up interest in getting shoe label laws and to find out what he could do to help get them. Gardner has written to government heads of other countries to find out what laws are in existence on the labeling of shoes and he has had several articles published in trade journals on the subject.

He recently received a reply from Prime Minister Robert G. Menzies of Australia, along with a copy of the laws that control shoe labeling in that country. Although the laws are not as comprehensive as Gardner would have them, Australia's regulations are the best of any country in the world, and may serve as a pattern for setting up such laws here.

More Expensive
Not only are they more expensive in the long run, but cheaply-made shoes do not give proper support to the wearer's feet, Gardner said, and that after they have been wet once they are apt to lose their shape completely. He said this is particularly harmful to children's feet and he added that foot doctors claim that 65 per cent of the shoes on the market today cannot be rebuilt for foot correction purposes because of the cheap materials used in their manufacture. He also said that one third of the children's shoes today are not even repairable.

Paper is the most common of the "cheap" materials used in shoe construction and lately it is being found in even the better grades of shoes, Gardner said that 75 per cent of the children's shoes made today have wooden shanks instead of steel, or else no shanks at all.

In some women's shoes, he said, a manufacturer will import expensive leather and do a fine job of styling to make a handsome shoe, but inside there will be found paper insoles, heel counters and toe caps. The customer pays a high price for the shoes, which may actually "fall apart" if they get wet. This is particularly true of summer shoes, Gardner said.

Gardner's complaint isn't so much the fact that paper fiber is used in shoe manufacture, but that if it is used the shoe buyer should know what he is getting for his money.

Sends Petitions
Right now Gardner is in the process of sending out hundreds of petitions to cities all over the United States to aid in getting legislation passed. This was suggested by Sen. Wayne Morse, along with other information, in a three-page reply to Gardner's inquiry. Gardner has picked 12 cities in each state to send the petitions, which he is doing entirely on his own.

On the petition in his own shop Gardner has about 200 signatures, a good many of which are Medford doctors and shoe retailers, who recognize the trouble caused from poorly-made footwear.

The petitions read: "National Petition to Label Shoes — To state on a label what shoes are made of for your protection, due to the use of paper fiber and imitation leather in their manufacture. I believe I could buy better shoes if they were labeled. I believe I could buy better shoes by label and better foot health would result. I believe a great savings in money would result if I could buy shoes by label."



EXAMINES SHOE—Above, Wilbur Gardner, who feels that buyers are being "gypped" when they pay high prices for shoes that are made of paper, examines a typical child's shoe that couldn't even be repaired because of cheap construction. Gardner is trying to get federal legislation passed to compel manufacturers to tell on a label what shoes are made of. Upon the advice of Senator Wayne

Morse, he is now in the process of sending petitions, similar to the one in his own shop, to other shoe shops throughout the United States. Gardner feels that if shoes were labeled a buyer could judge better for himself if a pair of shoes is worth the money or not and would know what to expect from the shoes as far as wear is concerned.

Also, at the suggestion of Sen. Morse, Gardner is collecting specific evidence of the use of paper fiber in particular brands of shoes, and on his counter for the public to see are cut-away samples of shoes made with paper that could not be repaired.

Attached to Shoes
He believes that the label should be attached to the shoes themselves and if they contain paper fiber, wood or plastics, or any other product besides genuine leather, the label should say so in plain language and not call the material by some high-sounding name.

In this way Gardner feels that buyers will be able to judge better for themselves whether or not a particular shoe is worth the price.

Shoe retailers seem to be in accord with Gardner's ideas too, because they often get "kick-backs" from customers who find that a pair of expensive shoes is cheaply made.

Receives Commendation
Gardner has already received commendation from Parent's magazine for his investigations and he has received endorsement from various organizations locally. He also received a letter from Gino Prato, the Brooklyn shoe repairman who became known nationally after his appearance on \$64,000 Question, commending him on what he has done. Prato said he would visit Gardner in Medford soon to see if he can do anything to help get a shoe label law passed.

Gardner now has the ball rolling on a nation-wide scale and the time may not be far off when a person can go into a store and buy a pair of shoes and at least get what he pays for, putting to an end to what Gardner calls the deceptive practice of our shoe industries.

Austrian Advisor Dies After Session

New York — Dr. Egon F. Ranshofen-Wertheimer, 63, former advisor to the Austrian delegation to the United Nations General Assembly session which ended here Dec. 4, died Friday. He apparently suffered a heart attack while waiting for a plane to return to Austria.

Ranshofen-Wertheimer was appointed a member of the Secretariat of the League of Nations in 1930. He served as a consultant for organization of the United Nations with the U.S. Department of State from 1945 to 1946.

Many Left Homeless After Bandia Raid

Tokyo — A bandit raid on a small village on West Java on Thursday left seven dead and more than 1,000 homeless, the Communist New China News agency reported Saturday.

The agency, quoting an Antara dispatch from Djakarta, said elements of the "Islamic Army" plundered the village of Kunin-gan, West Java, killed seven villagers, wounded two others and then set fire to 301 homes.

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Year-End Rally Marks Stock Market Trends

By ELMER C. WALZER
United Press Financial Editor
New York — Stocks enjoyed a miniature year-end rally during the past week with steel and building shares leading.

Utilities gained 0.70 point on the week in their average which closed at 68.65. That left it 0.11 point above the 1956 closing, in contrast with the industrials which were down 66.57 points from the 1956 close and rails down 55.84 points on the year. Industrials closed this week at 432.90, up 5.70 points. Rails closed at 97.39, up 0.47. The market gained in three of the four sessions and met weekend realizing and evening up operations on Friday.

During the week the cumulative sales total for 1957 moved above the 1956 figure. With two days left in each year the totals stood at 551,124,580 shares for 1957 against 549,800,708 shares in 1956. In the last two sessions of last year, sales totaled 2,790,000 and 3,680,000 shares respectively.

Gains Outnumber Losses
Of the 1,397 issues traded during the week 660 gained, 560 declined, and 177 held unchanged with news of the business world more drab than in many a week. About the only bright spot was retail trade that apparently set a record high for the Christmas holiday and indi-

cated a record for all of 1957. Big industries had more than the seasonal shutdowns and all of them declined.

Trading in the market brought out a daily average of 2,476,978 shares, against 2,634,644 shares daily in the previous week. The decline reflected a reduction in tax loss selling and an absence of many traders for an extended Christmas holiday.

Steel issues showed gains on the week ranging to nearly 3 points in Armco. Republic Steel rose more than 2 and U. S. Steel and Bethlehem rose nearly 2 points each. The steel group got a lift from a statement by Republic that it was lighting five of its closed furnaces in the Youngstown district sooner than anticipated because of better demand for steel.

Housing Outlook Improved
Various agencies told of improved outlook for housing next year. The increase projected, while less than 100,000 units, was seen as highly significant. Better demand for new homes is expected to be helped along by easier money and improved terms for purchasers.

A long list of issues in any way connected with building moved higher. U. S. Gypsum gained 3 1/4 points and gains of 2 points or more were set by Bestwall Gypsum, Corning Glass, Pittsburgh Plate Glass, Crane Co., Masonite, Minneapolis Honeywell, Trane and Georgia-Pacific Corp. Celotex rose nearly 2 points and so did Westinghouse Electric. General Electric rose more than a point.

Several of the railroad shares made a good showing despite the 19th successive weekly decline from a year ago in car loadings. Kansas City Southern and Western gained 2.

Zenith Leads TV Group
Zenith ran up 5 1/4 points in the television group. General Foods rose 2 in its section. Fidelity Phenix gained 4 1/2 and Thompson Products 3 1/2 points in the special issues. Caterpillar Tractor rose 2 and Ingersoll-Rand 4 1/4 points in the road builders. Aircrafts and tire shares moved irregularly as did oils. Motors eased on a reduced output and predictions the new year would bring sales of 5.3 million units against 5.8 million in 1957.

Drug issues met demand along with many other consumer goods items. American Home Products rose 4 points and gains of more than 2 points each were set by Parke Davis, and American Cyanamid.

General Motors topped the list in volume with sales of 135,500 shares. It closed the week at 33 1/2, off 1/4 point. A year ago the stock sold at 44. Standard Oil N.J., with sales of 125,600 shares, was in second place. It rose 1/4 point to 49 3/4. North American Aviation, Pennsylvania Railroad, and Bethlehem Steel were in third, fourth, and fifth places respectively.

Michigan Governor To Be Chief Speaker

Los Angeles — Michigan Gov. G. Mennen Williams will deliver the keynote address at the opening session of the California Democratic council endorsing convention Jan. 10 in Fresno, Calif., it was announced Saturday.

The Democratic governor will arrive in San Francisco Jan. 9 and drive to Fresno. He'll return to Michigan the morning after the speech.



AUTO-TRAIN CRASH INJURES 16—Railroad workers repair track near Oakley, Cal., where the crack Santa Fe streamliner Golden Gate smashed into a stalled car and derailed, injuring 16 persons. The driver of the auto, who tried to flag down the on-rushing train, was uninjured.



NATION'S FIRST—This is the elaborate control room at Shippingport, Pa., as the nation's first full-scale atomic power plant went into operation. Pittsburgh began to use electricity produced from the atomic power. Three operators man the controls around the clock to keep tab on the distribution system, the turbine-generator section and the nuclear reactor furnace.

Oil Company Exec Dies In Denver

Denver — Edward T. Wilson, former president of the Continental Oil Co., died here Friday at St. Luke's hospital. He was 88 and had been ill only a short time.

He was president of the oil firm from 1912 until his retirement in Denver in 1932. He also was chairman of the board at the time of his retirement. Wilson is survived by four children, Mrs. Isabel Johnson of Portland, Mrs. Elsie Blackwell of Short Hills, N.J., Laurence R. Wilson of Portland and Robert D. Wilson of Denver.

Funeral arrangements were pending.

GERMANS VISIT FORMOSA

Taipei, Formosa — The first West German goodwill mission to visit this Nationalist Chinese island stronghold will arrive early next month, it was announced Saturday.

The Foreign Ministry said the 10-member group, most of whom are members of the West German Parliament, will make a two-week tour.



BOATLOAD—Three unidentified residents of Carmi, Ill., whose household possessions to higher ground after the Little Wabash River overflowed its banks, forcing 40 families to abandon their homes. The flood resulted from heavy rains following recent off-season tornadoes.