



GAZING AT RUINS of home in which Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Littlejohn and their four children were killed by fire are three brothers of Littlejohn and a cousin (white sweater). Family was sleeping when flames engulfed small Aid, O., structure.

Great Strides Made Against 'White Plague' in Fifty Years

Editor's note: Following is the first in a series of six articles by Delos Smith, United Press International science editor, on the success of the fight against tuberculosis in the United States.

By DELOS SMITH
UP Science Editor
New York — (UPI) — Let's play a guessing game. What are Christmas seals for?

If you are vague in your answer, it dramatizes the greatest public health achievement in the history of the Western world.

The first Christmas seals 51 years ago weren't merely buying traditional decorations for their Christmas mail. They were fighting the dreaded "white plague" — tuberculosis — which was all around them and might well kill them, as it was killing their relatives and friends.

How astonished our forefathers would be if they could know that in 1958 it is necessary to explain the white plague to many people, and to identify "the captain of all these men of death," as the English preacher and author, John Bunyan, characterized it some 300 years ago. Readers with the longest memories may not realize that the younger generations have had little or no personal knowledge of tuberculosis.

"The Captain" today is a faint shadow of its old self. It killed only 7.8 out of every hundred thousand Americans

last year. It killed almost 200 out of every hundred thousand in 1900.

In 1958 there is no unchangeable reason why any person must die of TB.

Optimistic in Fight
Some believe tuberculosis is done for in our country. One of these is Dr. Louie I. Dublin, one of the world's most respected statisticians. He believes, on a statistical basis, that tuberculosis will be "eradicated" from the United States within 20 years even if no more is done to combat it than is being done now.

But medical and other scientists who know "The Captain" on much more intimate terms than the statistical, doubt very much Dublin is right, as much as they'd like to have the same faith. They have an abiding sense of unease. They know the enemy well and what alarms many of them most is that a large and growing segment of the public hardly knows the enemy at all any more.

Nothing big-scale can be done in this country without full public support, and this is written at the urging of bacteriologists, microbiologists, public health authorities and physicians who treat tuberculosis, and whom this writer meets on his reportorial rounds. They want everyone to know this enemy — weakened though it may be — and to be on guard against it.

Complicate Predictions
The rub is that the disease, tuberculosis, and the bacterium (the tubercle bacillus) which causes it, hang onto

many of their mysteries, as do the processes of defensive human body chemistry which have much to do with whether the bacterium kills or has little or no effect. These unknowns enormously complicate the guesses as to TB's future. The more experienced the tuberculosis scientist, the more likely he is to shun predictions and say simply, "I don't know."

There is plausible evidence that tuberculosis would have become a comparatively minor disease even if there had not been a vast anti-tuberculosis crusade sparked by an army of professionals and volunteers and financed in part by the \$438,440,000 which the public has put into Christmas seals since 1907. But for several reasons this is not of complete comfort to all TB-fighters.

Drugs May Lose Power

One disturbing thing is that the drugs of rather recent discovery, which can "arrest" 70 to 90 per cent of all tuberculosis cases — but not cure in the complete sense — may well lose their power, and anyway there are many technical difficulties in using them effectively.

Also, with fewer tubercle bacilli circulating among us than ever before, some authorities fear we may be building a population of people which would be highly susceptible to them if they were challenged at some future time.

There is no chance of wiping the TB bacterium off the face of the earth. When any-



YOUNG MAN IN A HURRY—Hovering in the background, Mrs. Janice Gilson, 20, smiles as ambulance stewards bundle her minutes old son, Francis Patrick Gilson III, for trip to hospital in San Francisco, after he came into the world practically unaided. Summoned by a phone call from Mrs. Gilson, the stewards, John Hart (left) and Joseph Lanthier, arrived in time to hear the tell-tale squalls that made it plain Francis Patrick had arrived.

Illegal Cutters' Names Given FBI

Klamath Falls—The federal bureau of investigation has received names of persons arrested here for illegally cutting Christmas trees from federal, state and private forest lands, according to Darroll K. Frewing, Rogue River National forest district ranger.

one speaks of quick "eradication" he means from the United States, the countries of Western Europe, and Japan. In other parts of the world the bacillus thrives and tuberculosis is high up among the top killers of human beings just as it was everywhere 50 years ago.

The results of the FBI investigation were being turned over to U. S. Attorney C. E. Luckey of Portland for his recommendations on prosecution. Names of persons apprehended were not released. Frewing said the FBI has recovered more than 5,000 young trees which were cut illegally. He said additional thousands have been cut illegally since October and hauled to California markets. The forest service, bureau of land management and private owners called in the state police and the FBI two weeks ago.

Chicago Columnist Acquitted by Jury

Los Angeles — (UPI) — Chicago columnist Irv Kupcinet, 46, has been acquitted by a jury of a misdemeanor drunk driving charge. The jury deliberated nearly five hours before returning the verdict in municipal court late Friday. Kupcinet was arrested last Aug. 26 while driving with Gregg Sherwood, 34, wife of auto heir Horace Dodge II. She was convicted at an earlier trial of plain drunkenness and was fined \$100.

Princess Charlotte, mother of Prince Rainier of Monaco and a prison welfare worker, employs former convicts on her estate near Laon, France. About 65 per cent of French families own one or more bicycles and there are upwards of 15 million bicycles now in use in France.

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