

Story of the Pony Express (3)

By Don Oakley and Ralph Lane



Early in 1860, eastern newspapers announced a new letter delivery service to the West. Many could not believe it. Thirteen days from New York to San Francisco! On March 31, letters from Washington and New York were entrained for St. Joseph, Mo., the westernmost terminus of the telegraph.

On the afternoon of April 3, a crowd assembled in St. Joe amid flags and bunting while a brass band entertained. But word was flashed that the messenger carrying the special mail had missed a connection in Detroit. He would be two hours late leaving Hannibal.

The men of the Hannibal and St. Joseph Railroad were well aware of the urgency. Orders were issued to clear the main track and close all switches. A nifty engineer, Addison Clark, was selected to drive the special train and told to set a record that would last 50 years. Clark covered the 206-mile run in four hours and 51 minutes, averaging over 40 miles per hour, a feat thought impossible.

At St. Joe, the mail was quickly stowed in the cantinas—49 letters, five telegrams and some special-edition newspapers—all at \$5 a half-ounce (later reduced to \$1). They were written or printed

on tissue paper and wrapped in oiled paper. Maximum weight for the mail had been set at 20 pounds.

Records divide the honor of being the first Pony Express rider to leave St. Joe between two men, Johnny Frey (or Frye) and Johnson William Richardson, though late evidence seems to favor the latter. At any rate, about 7:00 in the evening, the impatient rider was off to the sound of cheers and cannon shots on the first leg of an adventure that would carry the precious mochila 2,000 miles to the Pacific.

NEXT: When Mountains Fell.

Texas Representative Raps Submarine Cut

WASHINGTON (AP)—Navy plans to step up the Polaris missile-firing submarine program while cutting back construction of attack submarines brought criticism today from Rep. George H. Mahon (D-Tex.).

Mahon is chairman of the House Appropriations Defense subcommittee, which is considering the defense budget revisions approved Wednesday by President Eisenhower.

"It looks like a compromise package and I personally believe it's a poor package," Mahon commented.

He said he favored expansion of the Polaris submarine program but "I wouldn't give any serious consideration to eliminating the attack submarines, which are major antisubmarine weapons."

He said he believed most members of the Defense Appropriations subcommittee feel the same way. Senators of both parties generally applauded the missile program changes announced Wednesday. Here's what is involved.

The Defense Department asked Congress for 30 million dollars to start building six more Polaris submarines. This was a policy reversal on the part of the Pentagon. And Secretary of Defense Thomas S. Gates Jr. told Congress the Navy is willing to put off getting funds for two of three planned nuclear attack submarines already included in the new budget.

Earlier in the day, President Eisenhower also gave formal approval to increasing the size of six Atlas intercontinental missile squadrons and improving the ballistic warning system. The Pentagon disclosed the last six of the 13 planned Atlas squadrons each would have a total of 13 missiles—three more than under present plans. Earlier it had been thought that the squadrons which will be in place by the end of next year might gas as many as 15 missiles and pads.

Mahon voiced preliminary approval of the revised Atlas program.

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Lyndon B. Johnson of Texas, ex: "It is unfortunate that we did not pressing pleasure at the Atlas and throw the works into high gear Polaris speedup decisions, said some time ago."

Democrats Get Chance At West Virginia Meet

CHARLESTON, W. Va. (AP)—Those Democrats who are bent on stopping Sen. John F. Kennedy (D-Mass.) or at least slowing him down before the July 11 national convention will get their next big chance in West Virginia.

But the result either way will be largely psychological since no delegates will be bound.

Campaigning begins this week-end in a rematch between Kennedy and the man he topped two days ago in the Wisconsin presidential primary, Sen. Hubert H. Humphrey (D-Minn.).

There Kennedy won 29 1/2 and Humphrey 10 1/2 of Wisconsin's 31 convention votes. But results of West Virginia's May 10 primary election will not be binding on the delegates who will cast this state's 25 votes.

There aren't many known supporters of either Kennedy or Humphrey among those running for delegate. And political observers say they don't expect that situation to change, regardless of the outcome of the May 10 voting.

Humphrey will go on the road first. His campaign bus is due to leave here early Friday morning for a swing through southern West Virginia.

Kennedy will begin stumping Monday, also with a series of appearances in the southern part of the state. But already his two brothers, Robert and Ted, are meeting here with campaign workers. Flying in from Wisconsin Wednesday, Robert Kennedy said his brother would consider "a bare majority" as a major victory in West Virginia.

The nonbinding race here after the Wisconsin verdict would be like having batting practice after the crucial game, except for two things:

1. The prospect that overwhelmingly Protestant West Virginia will furnish a truer test than Wisconsin of the religious issue which arises because Kennedy is a Roman Catholic.

2. The fact that this is the next-to-last big chance his party foes will have to upset the Kennedy bandwagon in a primary. Not until the Oregon voting May 20 will Kennedy again go against serious opposition. Entered in the Democratic primary there along with Kennedy and Humphrey are Senate Democratic Leader Lyndon B. Johnson of Texas, Sen. Stuart Symington of Missouri, and Sen. Wayne L. Morse of Oregon.

Here, as in Wisconsin, both candidates undoubtedly will stick to the position that religion should not be an issue. But they can't keep it from being discussed. Its possible effect already is being discussed wherever people gather to talk politics in West Virginia.

A solid Kennedy victory here might do for him what his Wisconsin victory did not. It might dispel the fear felt by some party professionals that Kennedy, as a Catholic, could not win in November against the Republican nominee, almost certain to be Vice President Richard M. Nixon.

Catholics account for just over 15 per cent of church membership in West Virginia and not quite 5 per cent of the total population. The percentage of Catholics may

be higher among Democrats, who will do all the voting in the Kennedy-Humphrey contest. Unlike Wisconsin, West Virginia does not permit cross-over voting in primaries.

The Catholic population is heaviest upstate, especially in the steel towns.

Rural West Virginia is practically all Protestant, mostly Methodists and Baptists. Southern West Virginia is overwhelmingly Protestant, but there are Catholic parishes in some coal-mining sections there.

Although opinion is not unanimous, many West Virginia politicians think religion will work for Congressionalist Humphrey and against Catholic Kennedy in the areas of almost complete Protestant sway.

If so, another factor could work in the opposite direction in rural West Virginia, where Democrats tend to vote for men of somewhat conservative stamp. This is Humphrey's reputation of being a militant liberal.

As between Kennedy and Humphrey, the state leadership of both the AFL-CIO and the United Mine Workers is officially neutral.

The president of one of the state's three big UMW districts—Raymond O. Lewis of District 17—said that as an individual he favored Humphrey, although as district president his policy would be hands off. A few UMW locals are reported to have taken a stand for Humphrey.

Twelve delegates-at-large to the Democratic National Convention and 12 congressional district delegates will be elected in the West Virginia primary. Rounding out the state's 25 convention votes will be one-half vote each for the national committeeman and national committeewoman.

Right now Lyndon B. Johnson appears to hold the strongest chance for support in the West Virginia delegation.

PRODUCE ORAL VACCINE

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind. (UPI)—An oral live virus polio vaccine is being produced in pilot lots by the Pitman-Moore Co., an Indianapolis pharmaceutical manufacturer.

The company said it hopes to begin regular production soon of the live vaccine, a type developed by Dr. Albert B. Sabin of the University of Cincinnati. Pitman-Moore for several years has been one of the producers of the commonly used Salk dead virus vaccine.

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COMES WELL RECOMMENDED
FORT LEE, N.J. (UPI)—Andre Porumbeanu, who married runaway heiress Gamble Benedict, was offered a job Wednesday by Palisades Amusement Park President Irving Rosenthal. The job is managing the park's tunnel of love.

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