

# Washington Digest

## Fossils Intrigue Bright Young Scientist-Farmer

One of 40 Talented Youth Honored With Trip To Washington; Many Ponder Careers As Atomic Researchers.

By BAUKHAGE  
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He knew what a sphygmomanometer was used for; that a decigram equals 1.5432 grains; and that septicemia and anaphylaxis are different. Besides that, he collects fossils — enough to fill the farm kitchen at his home near Ellensburg, Wash. That's why 18-year-old Jim Gibson got a free trip to Washington, D. C., where he ate buffalo steak at the zoo; drank tea at the White House; gave congress a critical once-over; and listened to Lise Neitner, physics wizard, talk on atomic theory.

Jim is one of 40 bright young high school seniors selected as finalists in the fifth annual science talent search, sponsored by Science Service of Washington, with scholarships offered by Westinghouse Electric company. Sixteen thousand scientific-minded boys and girls, from every section of the country, took competitive examinations on such things as sphygmomanometers and decigrams; wrote essays on "My Scientific Project"; were interviewed by leading scientists. Three hundred of them won special recognition; 260 were given honorable mention; and 40 "finalists," includ-

fossils under the bed so long as they don't interfere with Jim's cooking. Yes, Jim does most of the cooking, but he's deprecatory on this score, saying his culinary exploits depend largely on a can-opener.

### Likes Collector Of Brains

Girls? Well, to appeal to Jim, they'd have to be as smart as Lise Neitner. The little gray-haired feminine scientist whose research led directly to the development of the atomic bomb, impressed him most of anything or anybody he saw in Washington, with the exception of the cyclotron at the bureau of standards. However, there was one girl he met at the Science Talent institute who he admitted was "interesting." She collected brains.

He knows all about running a farm and he keeps bees as part of his 4-H club work, but Jim Gibson isn't keen about farming as a living. He prefers fossils. And he's casting a speculative eye on the field of nuclear physics. . . as are well over half of the scientific-minded youngsters who came to Washington this year.

Incidentally, at the same banquet, Science Service Director Watson Davis mentioned a few "firsts" this fifth group of young scientists had chalked up. They ate broiled buffalo steak without a qualm after viewing the live variety at the Washington zoo; they prepared a "talk back" report of their opinions on the atomic energy and Kilgore bills to be submitted to congressional committees . . . and among the group was one Missourian, said Mr. Davis . . . the first Missourian, he added, who had ever gone into the White House and had not come out with a federal appointment.

There is a strange paradox in congress and it may cost the Democrats the pro-tem presidency of the senate. It's the exact reverse of the "unholy alliance" of today—the coalition between the southern Democrats and the northern Republicans—and this is the way some of the crystal-gazers on Capitol Hill expound it:

There have been no real issues before the country over which the voters could tear their hearts asunder. But there have been some bitter ones within congress and among the Democrats in the senate especially, which have caused incendiary intramural political friction.

Senator McKellar, Democrat of Tennessee, has been, in the eyes of some of his more progressive colleagues, a brake on the wheels of what they consider their progress.

Senator McKellar has sturdily and steadily bucked administration legislation, not merely the Fair Employment Practices bill, but other measures which the "liberal" element on both sides of the aisle have supported. Nobody denies that after the next election the Republicans are going to get some of those 17 seats in northern and western constituencies away from their Democratic opponents. They may get enough of them so the parties will be at least more evenly balanced even in the opinion of the more conservative prognosticators.

That is half of the proposition. The other half is the growing wrath of some of the liberals on the Democratic side who are very sore at McKellar for deserting the party line.

It is not out of the picture that enough of these liberals will be willing to kick over the traces and vote for a Republican president pro-tem or at least vote against McKellar and thus produce the strange but possible phenomenon of a representative of the minority party presiding over the senate.

This is not a prediction, but it is the presentation of a paradoxical possibility, granted the trend of the times becomes the course of tomorrow.

The FCC must decide whether the new telephone recorder destroys the telephone's privacy. It might keep people from wasting telephone time, and think of all the things you wouldn't say if you knew they were going to be on the record! For one thing, it might make people more sympathetic toward radio commentators.

Practically every woman in America is pursuing polyamide products, these days. Polyamide is what nylon stockings are made of.



James Gibson

ing Jim Gibson, came to Washington, D. C., to attend the Science Talent institute.

I met Jim at the banquet which wound up the hectic weekend of interviews and sightseeing tours, and asked him how he'd happened to start collecting fossils instead of stamps, birds' eggs, or matchbox covers. Jim, a ruddy, rumped, serge-suited farm boy, scoffed at stamps as "dull." Fossils aren't.

### One Fossil 20,000 Years Old

Why, just this year, he was nosing around some cliffs in his part of the state of Washington, and he came upon an interesting rock. That is, it would look like a rock to you and me. Jim saw something embedded in it. Maybe a bone. He and his fossil-minded companion hacked out the rock, and with considerable effort, lugged it into their car. It weighed 120 pounds. At home, Jim "liberated" what he had seen embedded in the rock. A small piece of wood. He took it to a scientific professor friend of his, and learned that what he had found was a 20,000-year-old fossil. Jim was as excited as if somebody had presented him with a brand-new 1946 model automobile.

The serious, brown-eyed youngster tosses decades and centuries around with great ease. Over the mushroom soup, he dug around in his crowded pockets and produced an odd-looking object.

"See this?" he asked.

"Um," I said. Another piece of rock.

"It's a shark's tooth," Jim explained. "It's eight million years old. Dr. Foshag of the Smithsonian Institution gave it to me."

I hurriedly rolled the conversational ball back to 1946.

"What does your family think of your fossils?" I wanted to know.

Well, it turns out that Jim, and his father, a dairy farmer, "batch it." Mr. Gibson has no objections to

## BARBS . . . by Baukhage

What use is a ceiling on butter when cream can rise as high as it wants to? Naturally it will seek—reversing gravity—the highest levels, including ice cream.

The black market in America appears about as easy to handle as the bootlegger of prohibition days and the bootlegger is waiting in the wings too.

USO Pres. Lindsay Kimball says Americans move from vast enthusiasm to complete indifference. That's certainly true: Remember monopoly, Coue, mah-jong, miniature golf?

Practically every woman in America is pursuing polyamide products, these days. Polyamide is what nylon stockings are made of.



ON THEIR DIAMOND WEDDING DAY . . . Seventy-five years of wedded bliss, spent in the log cabin home which they constructed themselves when they were first married, is the proud record of Mr. and Mrs. George Turner, Viroqua, Wis. They were married by a Methodist circuit rider and have four married children who live in the surrounding countryside. Mr. Turner is 96 and his wife, Mary Jane, is 92 years old.



HIROSHIMA KNOWS EFFECTS OF ATOMIC BOMB. . . Seven months after the atomic bomb hit Hiroshima, what was once a thriving city still lays in ruins except for an emergency housing project which is attempting to provide shelter. Shown in the photo is one of the 600 homes which are arising from the rubble of what was once war factories. These natives know the real power of atomic bombs.



HER LAST VISIT . . . Mrs. Erna Haupt, whose son was executed as a spy after he landed by submarine from Germany, visits her husband prior to her deportation to Germany, and the start of his life sentence, for aiding son in his spy work.



FAMINE EMERGENCY COMMITTEE APPOINTED . . . With Chester C. Davis, upper left, as chairman, President Truman has named the executive group of the Famine Emergency committee. Other members are Eugene Meyer, publisher, vice chairman, lower left; George H. Gallup, upper right, director of the American Institute of Public Opinion, and Miss Anna Lord Strauss, lower right.



BRINGING G.M. STRIKE TO AN END . . . Weary and exhausted at the end of the 113-day General Motors strike, federal conciliator James Dewey, with strike terms in his hand, reads the terms which sent the workers back to work. Millions of dollars in wages and profits were lost while the strike was being conducted. In addition to an increase of 18 1/2 cents an hour, other benefits were secured by the union members.

**NEWS BEHIND THE NEWS**  
By PAUL MALLON  
Released by Western Newspaper Union.

### TRUMAN'S CABINET FORCED SECRETARY BYRNES' HAND

WASHINGTON.—The story is told—I do not know how truly—that State Secretary Byrnes faced a verbal firing squad in the cabinet before his recent firming of international policy against encroachments by Russia around the world.



In the inner group, it is related that President Truman allowed his cabinet advisers to express plainly to Byrnes their dissatisfaction at the total lack of results from his position as a diplomatic neutral. Indeed, a majority is said to have pointed out to him that to be a neutral in conflicts between democracy and totalitarianism is to be ineffective.

Some of Mr. Byrnes' friends are trying to stamp out the story, contending he wrote one or two of his firming notes before the date of the meeting at which the execution of appeasement, if not of Mr. Byrnes, took place.

### PURPOSE OF CHURCHILL'S MISSOURI ADDRESS

I am inclined to believe the story because Mr. Truman stepped out conspicuously on the same platform from which the Churchill address, urging an Anglo-American alliance, was presented. Mr. Truman did not commit himself, except by his pres-



President Truman

ence, but when a Missouri university grants an honorary degree to anyone you may be sure Mr. Truman arranged the affair. Indeed, he is supposed to have read the address in advance. You may recall Mr. Churchill paid a final visit to Washington a week or more before they both went out together for the historic occasion.

The union of these two men for the occasion, however, should not be interpreted as a definite forecast that all Mr. Churchill wanted will come to pass, immediately or even soon. Indeed, common interpretation around the country, judging by the comment and reaction, was that Mr. Churchill was inspired by a desire to give a boost to the proposed loan-gift of more than four billion dollars to the British government. No doubt this is true, but the deeper meaning of his words should not be lost in such an obvious deduction.

The important thing is, he spoke out against Russia. He removed the diplomatic velvet from his tongue and talked of realities. He dropped pretense and said what he thought.

### DIPLOMATIC TRICKERY HAS NO PLACE IN U. S.

Such plain words have not been much in order around here lately. The Byrnes policy had been founded on other factors than plain speaking, to say the least. I think it is fair to say the advocates of the Byrnes school of tactics (largely confined to the left-wing groups) were timid in their fear to face truth.

The mere facing of it in these new diplomatic ventures therefore represents progress. The confused world cannot find stability and peace in diplomatic trickery, appeasements, spoken words without meaning, written and sworn words not to be carried into effect, or any of these devices—all lacking confidence, security and good faith necessary to sound understanding.

Agreement must be built upon these ingredients as a foundation, or they are meaningless and dangerous. To fear that war will come is in itself a position of weakness. It will come either way, if it is to come, because it can come only through action of our adversaries. If we face the facts, we will know what the score is and we will be prepared. If we dodge the issue and retreat from position to position in the face of mere diplomatic pressures, and delude ourselves into believing surrender is peace, our fate is in the hands of our adversaries.

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