

# WHO'S NEWS THIS WEEK

By LEMUEL F. PARTON  
(Consolidated Features—WNU Service.)

**NEW YORK.**—When Parks Johnson and Wally Butterworth brought their pioneer quiz broadcast to New York city back in 1934, it took them just about eight weeks of diligent quizzing to get an answer to the question, "Where is Singapore?"

The other day the ninth anniversary of their Vox Pop program, the first outbreak of the growing quiz craze, now rampant on all networks, was celebrated. In an age of deepening uncertainty, people find great felicity if they happen to know how many toothpicks there are in a cord of birchwood—and sustenance for an ailing ego. Messrs. Johnson and Butterworth cash in in a big way.

Parks Johnson is the son of a Methodist minister. He had been a captain in the World War, a newspaper reporter, a cotton broker, and in 1932 was running a one-man advertising agency in Houston, Texas. A client wanted a radio idea. Mr. Johnson quizzed himself at length and got the right answer.

He set up a microphone in the lobby of a Houston theater and began his quiz. At first he had to hand out one-dollar bills to lure participants, but the "mike-fright" soon passed and Vox Pop quickly became a successful program.

Mr. Butterworth, former phonograph salesman, radio singer and announcer, came in later. Soon after they were established in New York their program was on a big network. In 1940, they carried their microphone more than 50,000 miles around the country, and to date, have asked about 300,000 questions.

Newspapers were ahead of radio, however, in getting at the question-and-answer mother lode of interest in their own field. It was in 1920, that Miriam Tichenor, a reporter on the New York Daily Mail, suggested to George T. Hughes, the city editor, the daily questioning of five or six citizens at random. Mr. Hughes started the feature and slugged it "The Inquiring Reporter." Under this and other titles it still carries on in many newspapers. This, however, is an opinion, rather than an information inquiry.

A NEW YORK doctor, a friend of this writer, says physicians who have made a life-long study of diet, nutrition and mass conditioning are wondering why physical specialists ask training for defense is being organized by athletes, instead of specialists in physical fitness. Without disparagement to any of the persons mentioned, he cited Gene Tunney, Alice Marble and John B. Kelly, the last an undefeated oarsman, as examples in which eminence in athletics is substituted for precise knowledge of how to "toughen-up" America.

The discussion had to do with Mr. Kelly's current prescription of a "courage diet" for the nation, in which he says he has listed caloric and vitamin combinations which will enable us to lick our weight in wildcats.

Mr. Kelly, a former bricklayer and contractor, is chairman of the Philadelphia Democratic committee, and last August became director of physical training for national defense. He was formerly a Republican, and is veteran of much fast and intricate milling in both parties.

The tall and athletic "Handsome Jack" Kelly, as he is called, quit the Philadelphia public schools at the age of 16 and got a job in a brickyard. He was an ambulance driver in the World War, came back with a capital of \$40 and opened his own brickyard. Twelve years later, at the age of 31, he was the Olympic single sculls champion, winning for America at Amsterdam. In 1926, he retired from rowing as the undefeated champion oarsman of the world. At the age of 32, he still rows five miles every morning.

In September, 1940, President Roosevelt saw an article "handsome Jack" had written for a physical culture magazine and summoned him to lead the national "physical preparedness" endeavor. He now officially and formally heads this department and is working up plans for national mass calisthenics.

He is one of four eminent brothers, a playwright; Walter, the famous "Virginia Judge" of the stage; Patrick H., deceased in 1937, who was the builder of the Free Public Library in Philadelphia.

## WPA to Study Eating Habits

Writers to Turn Talents To Americana in U. S. Defense Series.

WASHINGTON.—The corps of editors and writers employed on WPA Writers' projects, having virtually completed the American Guide series of 50 colorful volumes on 48 states, Alaska and Puerto Rico, are turning now to individual aspects of Americana.

The Guide series, presenting a comprehensive account of the history, culture, economy and detailed touring information of the states and two territories, is to be followed by a volume on American eating habits, a National Defense series, and six regional books on American arts and crafts.

**Wide Range Covered.**  
The 800 titles turned out by the projects, which now employ about 2,300 persons, soon will be increased by "The United States: A Pictorial Study of a Democracy," which will be printed in Spanish and distributed south of the border in another bid for hemispheric solidarity. An English edition may be published later.

The 800 publications range from pamphlets of purely local interest to the American Guide series.

Why does the government spend money for all of these books?

Assistant Works Projects Commissioner Florence Kerr answers: "The urgencies of the present decade make mutual understanding between communities of the nation a prerequisite to national unity. The ultimate goal of the Writers' Program is to contribute to national unity through presenting America to Americans."

The list of publications in the Life in America series will be headed by six regional volumes bearing the title: "Hands That Build the Nation." In these books will be described the native arts and crafts of the people of New England, the Middle Atlantic and Great Lakes states, the Southeast, the central states, the Southwest and the Northwest. Each volume will contain about 40,000 words and have 60 or more illustrations in color.

**Food Tastes Studied.**  
"America Eats" is the title selected tentatively for another volume in the Life in America series, a book devoting one chapter to a community meal typical to some phase of American life—a political barbecue, a church supper, a Rotary luncheon, a clam bake, breakfast in a large city cafeteria, a family reunion dinner and others.

The writers also will attempt to uncover the traditions that link baked beans with Boston, and hot biscuits and fried chicken with the South, and to learn why Westerners are supposed to like fried meats better than roasts.

Other projected volumes include a history of forest conservation, an account of the western rangelands in terms of Indians, Spaniards and American frontiersmen who helped carve a great empire out of a wilderness. A contemporary and historical account of the Indian also will be written.

Two sets of guides and a series of State Health Almanacs are contemplated in the National Defense series. One group of guides will pertain to military and naval academies, the other will be devoted to the larger posts and reservations of the army and the navy.

### Hitch-Hike Technique

Is Taught in College

AUSTIN, TEXAS.—College students in the Southwest now will have skilled technique in thumbing rides.

Keyes Carson Jr., Texas Aggie senior and president of the National Hitchhikers association, visited other Texas colleges, organized chapters and gave instruction in sure-fire methods to get a lift.

To University of Texas students Carson explained some of the aids to getting a ride. A smile and use of a "hitch-hiker's arsenal," will double or triple the chances, Carson said.

The first tool taken from the arsenal, he explained, is a small telescope. Taking position where a clear view of the road is available, approaching cars are checked through it.

Another aid is a small reflector sign held up for the motorist to see. It gives the hitch-hiker's name and where he wants to go.

"Always smile when asking for a ride," he advised the students. "Every one likes to see a smile and they like to see someone who looks like an appreciative person."

He has tested his equipment and approach in nearly 217,000 miles of hitch-hiking.

### Soldiers Hit Jackpot

In Dispensing Machine

CAMP WOLTERS, TEXAS.—There was a great deal of scurrying and scampering in the office of the Camp Wolters motor pool the other day. Mechanics dropped their tools, truck drivers and chauffeurs came a-running and clerks put down their ledgers. Primed with two nickels, a soft-drink dispensing machine in the office gave out with three cases of pop before it was empty.

## Our Iceland Force Is Well Equipped

Has Comforts and Clothing Superior to British.

REYKJAVIK, ICELAND.—A regiment of trained soldiers recruited from the factories and farms of Ohio, Tennessee and Kentucky and with a history studded with battle honors from Bull Run to the Argonne, forms a prominent part of the American fighting force on Iceland.

Most striking is their superiority in clothing, articles of comfort and armament over British infantry here.

Like old soldiers the Americans settled down in their heated, storm-proof Nissen huts. There were no complaints about the cold.

One company has an orderly room which would put some of the British officers' messes to shame. Its furnishings included overstuffed chairs and couches of modern design, a table tennis outfit, radio and magazine rack.

In the officers club the Americans are preparing for a dance for army nurses and local girls. The club has the same furnishings as that for the enlisted men with the addition of a "juke box," bar and four slot machines. Over the bar is the newly designed red, white and blue insignia of Field Force Four, the regimental insignia and the Great Seal of the United States.

Enlisted men and officers have plenty of blankets and heavy clothing against the arctic blasts. In addition to the blue denim work clothes, field and garrison uniforms and coats, they have received fur caps, wool-lined mackinacs, heavy galoshes, gloves, five pairs of shoes and heavy underclothes and socks.

The men are eager to show the workings of their new Garand rifles.

### New Lens on Telescope

Seeks Hot Bright Stars

PASADENA, CALIF.—Recent development of photographic plates sensitive to red light has led the Mount Wilson observatory to remodel its 10-inch telescope for a search for distant, hot bright stars.

A prism is attached to the telescope for studying the stars by their spectrums. The lens used with it originally was designed to focus on the blue light from stars.

Dr. Frank E. Ross, optical consultant on the 200-inch telescope for Mt. Palomar, has designed a lens for the 10-inch instrument which will focus on the red and yellow end of the spectrum.

E. C. Williams of the Mount Wilson instrument shop, developed a variable-speed driving device by which astronomers can press a button and obtain any desired movement of the telescope. Most telescopes are kept focused on a star by a clock drive.

The new device eliminates the necessity of adjusting for temperature changes and makes it possible, according to Dr. Paul W. Merrill, to spread out the light of a star for spectrographic studies.

### Vitamins in Oranges

Help in Surgical Cases

LOS ANGELES.—Vitamins found in oranges and vegetables are playing a new part in surgical operations.

"Administration of the proper vitamin doses before an operation is serving materially to reduce fatalities," says Dr. Clinton H. Thienes, pharmacology professor of the University of Southern California.

He told a meeting of the Southern California Chapter, American College of Surgeons, that vitamin C, obtained from oranges and other citrus fruits, increases the ability of the body to produce fibrous tissue in scar areas.

Dr. Thienes added that vegetables produce vitamin K, which prevents post-operative hemorrhage by inducing proper blood coagulation.

Administration of these vitamins was necessary only in cases of persons showing a deficiency in them, he explained. A week's treatment, given through the mouth, would prepare the ordinary patient for the operation. In an emergency, however, he said, the vitamins were injected into the veins.

### Helper's Dream Saves

Life of Safe Expert

NEW YORK.—Locksmith Charles M. Courtney was about to open a safe with a drill and blow torch when an assistant suggested he try to pick the lock.

The assistant had had a dream that a safe blew up as they were opening it.

Courtney picked the lock, opened the safe and found two sticks of dynamite in it. Had he used the torch, he, his assistant and the house would have been "blown to smithereens," he said.

### It's the Little One

That Really Got Away

RICHMOND, VA.—John E. Payne Jr. tells about the little one that got away after trying his ankle for bait. Payne removed his socks and shoes to wade into the stream and cast. He felt a stinging sensation in his foot and looked down to find a silver perch charging fiercely. It was too small to catch.



(Released by Western Newspaper Union.)

### T. Jefferson, Farmer

AS OFFICIAL Washington hums with Uncle Sam's defense preparations, a group of stone masons are quietly putting the finishing touches on a stately, marble-domed shrine rising to completion as a memorial to Thomas Jefferson. The temple will immortalize Jefferson's contributions to his country.

Every citizen is familiar with Jefferson's greatest achievement—the Declaration of Independence. Many recall his authorship of the Bill of Rights, his unyielding devotion to religious freedom, education and democracy. Few Americans, perhaps, are aware of another of Jefferson's achievements—his contributions to the development of modern, scientific farming.

As a practical farmer Jefferson was constantly on the alert for new ideas. He made his Monticello estate into a progressive experimental farm where new machinery, new methods, improved stock breeding, new crops and tests in restoring soil fertility were tried out. Over a period of years he grew as many as 32 different vegetables at Monticello.

The Sage of Monticello had many problems to contend with. The land he acquired was worn out by generations of bad agricultural methods in a single crop type of farm economy in which tobacco had been king. No attempts at diversification or fertilization had been made. Unlike the



THOMAS JEFFERSON  
(A bust portrait by Houdon, French sculptor.)

farmer of today, who can get advice from his county agents, agricultural college agronomist or experiment station on whether his soil is deficient in nitrogen, phosphorus and potash, and then obtain the correct analysis of commercial fertilizer, Jefferson had to depend on talks with his neighbors and his reading of farm papers and books published in England.

When he learned something new about agriculture he recorded it in a "Farm book" he kept in his own handwriting. One account tells how to lay out experimental plots to test the effects of fertilizers. In these tests his plant foods were manure and gypsum. Unfortunately for him fertilizers, as we know them today, were not in existence.

Writing to George Washington concerning the run-down condition of his land after overseers had farmed it during his absence on public business, Jefferson described the use of legumes as a soil conditioner. He discovered that clover, vetch and peas had a soil-enriching power, but did not understand that this lay in their ability to impart nitrogen to the land.

Crop rotation was another measure he championed. "My rotation is triennial," he wrote to a friend, "that is to say, one year of wheat and two of clover in the stronger fields, or two of peas in the weaker, with a crop of Indian corn or potatoes between every other rotation—i.e., one in seven years. Under this course of culture, aided with manure, I hope my fields will recover their fertility."

In addition to his pioneer efforts to put back into the soil fertilizing elements removed by constant cropping, Jefferson waged a winning battle against soil erosion. With his son-in-law, T. M. Randolph, he practiced horizontal plowing and bedding on hillsides that is reminiscent of present day contour plowing.

"Jefferson's enlightened efforts at soil conservation and the bettering of farming methods entitle him to foremost rank among great American agriculturists," says an official of the Middle West Soil Improvement committee. "He had an instinctive feeling that man should be a careful custodian of the soil entrusted to his care. His work in soil improvement, however, primitive as it was, helped pave the way for modern soil science."

Jefferson's farm improvement program included experiments in livestock breeding in co-operation with President Madison. His scientific knowledge was likewise applied to the problem of improving farm machinery. Half a century before the steel plow was invented he designed an all-metal plow with a mould board that turned the soil effectively. Shaped according to mathematical computations, the mould board met the least possible resistance from the earth. Jefferson also devised a seed drill, a hemp brake, and a primitive threshing machine.



(Released by Western Newspaper Union.)

### WHEN AGE CREEPS UP, SMALL TOWN OFFERS FRIENDLINESS

TO MOVE, to change from one home to another, from one locality to another that is far away, has a different meaning to those of different ages.

To youth, moving means change that is adventure and the distance to that far-away place but lends to it an appealing enchantment.

Those who have passed the zenith of life are living largely in the past. To them old ties, old associations have welded strong chains that are not easily broken. The old house, like its occupants, has passed its best days, but it is home. Its rooms have echoed the merry prattle of little children—your children, now with homes and families of their own in distant places. Its lighted windows and honey atmosphere have welcomed you after the day's labors. Its walls have shielded you from the storms. In its library you put your finger on any desired book. You knew just where your pipe would be. Your slippers were there beside your favorite chair, inviting you to a comfortable evening.

Yes, the old house was home, despite the changes the ceaseless movement of a great city had wrought all about it. Strange faces had taken the place of the old neighbors. Today there is no one to whom you wish a cheery good morning; no one with whom you may enjoy an evening's chat. The faces you see this week are not those you saw last week, or those you will see next week. No, the old home is but now an oasis in a sea of ever-changing sands of humanity. The locality has changed from one of homes to one of rooming houses, warrens in which reside for a day, a week or a month those to whom "home" is a meaningless word.

The old neighbors have disappeared. Many of them are occupying last resting places in the cemeteries. Others are scattered hither and yon, and now you—and the you is me and mine—are to go, exchanging the roaring, scurrying metropolitan city for a bungalow amidst the quietude and simple pleasures of a small town, where we hope again to find what we lost—neighbors and friends from whom we will receive a cheery good morning.

It will be a bit hard to forget the old home, with all the memories that surround it. We go not upon an adventure, but in search of the things the old home once provided—the simple pleasures and the smiling, friendly greetings of neighbors. Such things exist in the towns and villages of America.

### THAT FARM OF YOURS

HOLD ONTO that farm as you hold onto your hat in a windstorm. Should inflation come, as seems probable, it will provide food, shelter and warmth for you and your family through that and through the days, months or years of depression that will follow. The man with acres to cultivate will be king.

### THE AMERICAN SYSTEM AND 'THE OLD LADY'

A FEW YEARS ago I stood one day beside a linotype operator, watching his fingers idle over the keys of the machine he was operating. I knew his capabilities. The plant had, up to a few weeks before, operated on a piece basis, and each day that man had produced more than twice what he was then producing, but the union had banned piece work and forced a time basis, fixing a minimum the company could demand. It was that daily minimum this operator was producing.

"John," I asked, "were you more tired at the end of a day when you did piece work than you are now, working on time and producing about half the type you did then?"

"Not a bit," he replied, "but why should I work faster so the 'old lady' out in Omaha may have a few more dollars to spend?"

The "old lady" is dead now. Of the profits that were made, she took none with her on the road she traveled, other than enough to pay for a shroud and casket. A considerable portion of those profits went to provide more machines that meant more jobs for more men to support more homes. Another portion went into a reserve that provided pay for John, and other Johns, during the days of depression, when losses instead of profits were piling up day after day. The remainder is today invested in worthy institutions that are enjoyed by the general public.

The little story illustrates the American system of free competition.

### COST OF SCHOOLING

IN CALIFORNIA in 1940 the average cost for the year for primary schooling of children of the state was \$107.40. There was a wide variation in the cost in different school districts, with \$216.86 as the top and \$60.65 as the bottom. The difference in cost was largely the difference in training that the children received. In districts, whether city or country, where the training was confined to fundamentals of the three "r's," the cost was low. With so-called frills, it was high.



(Released by Western Newspaper Union.)

### BR—RR—ING!

Ann Carson climbed quickly down off the small stepladder she was using to hang the glittering angel on the topmost bough of the Christmas tree. The sharp clang of the doorbell was a welcome sound. Hastening joyously she flung the door wide open.

"For me? Come in, Timmy." She smiled down at the wizened old hunchback shivering on the doorstep. Ann took the package tendered almost ceremoniously, bearing conspicuously the label of his own small flower shop. And with the privilege of a lifelong friend Timmy followed her into the warm lamplit room.

Slowly and musingly Ann untied the bright tinsel bows. She knew without looking what the box contained and as her fingers broke the seals she seemed again to hear Jerry's voice, low, quivering and hurt.

They had gone to a dance that memorable Christmas eve and homeward through the whitening mist she had tried, bravely, to tell him she must marry another man.

A frantic Jerry pleading and a strange new ache at her heart, she had stood for a moment on the run-



White Roses!

ning board of his car and Jerry had whispered: "But, darling little Ann, I'll love you always—always!"

He had touched with reverent clumsy fingers the single crimson rose she was wearing on the soft black fur of her evening wrap. The touch seemed to give him an idea. Jerry was romantic and they were both so young. "No matter wherever I may be, little Ann," he said, "I'll send you red roses at Christmas time and you will know."

"If ever," he had added, crushing her close as he lifted her down, "if ever I feel I can live without you, when the scars of this night heal, I'll send white ones. Remember!" and with a quick stride he was gone.

But she had not married the other man. Somehow after that she couldn't. But impulsive hot-headed Jerry left that night, a stowaway on a tramp steamer bound for China, and now one, two, three, four long years unrolled before her.

Her letters, pleading and unashamed had followed him half way around the earth gathering curious postmarks, undecipherable, but eventually they had returned, tattered, torn—but unclaimed.

But they had come. From strange lands in far odd corners they had come, those orders to old Timmy the florist for the red, red roses as red as her own heart's blood that now beat so chokingly in her throat. And she would wait, wait forever if need be, for Jerry.

Exultantly she lifted the lid. Roses!

But slowly over her face froze a look of piteous unbelief. The mass of blossoms blurred before her eyes and Jerry's pain-torn words rang in her ears: "If ever I can live without you, I'll send white ones." And—these were white. As white as the drifting snow outside. White roses! Mutely her lips formed the words. Oh, God, it couldn't be, after all these years! White roses!

"You don't like them? I very sorry." Crestfallen, apologetic, old Timmy was turning to go. "But the order came so late. No red ones left for you, only little wilty buds and so I peck the beeg, beeg white ones for you." His dim old eyes pleaded eloquently for her understanding.

Oh!—Oh!—breathlessly. The light that ne'er was on land or sea came flooding back into Ann's face and clear as a child's faith in Santa Claus the far-away chiming were pealing. Peace, good will to men! Jerry had meant red roses after all.

(McClure Syndicate—WNU Service.)

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