

"The Mighty Barnum"

AS THE MOST FAMOUS COMMENTATORS OF RADIO RECALL HIM TODAY

John B. Kennedy
TELLS ABOUT
"Tied by His Thumbs"

See the 20th Century Picture with
WALLACE BEERY

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QUEEN VICTORIA of England was what the Broadway boys would call a 'tough audience'. That celebrated historian of the unimportant, Strachey, tells how Her Majesty once squelched a wit of high renown. He was invited to show off at Windsor Castle. He sat down to dinner before an array of generals and admirals carrying enough chest decorations to make a mint. At the first opportunity, his straight man fed him a hook for a line. He cracked wise. There was a titter around the table until everybody looked at the top and saw the Queen imitating a night desk-sergeant. She glared at the smart alec, gave him the lorgnette-lowdown and purred acid:

"We are not amused," she said.

It was the bum's rush and the gallows for the comic, altho friends intervened, and Victoria compromised by letting him have a life-sentence as a second assistant lighthouse-keeper in Van Deeman's Land.

When a headline wit couldn't draw anything but penal servitude with a bright gag, what kind of act could get by the Widow of Windsor? P. T. Barnum—the same Phineas T. Barnum of Bridgeport, Conn., not only devised an act to get by, but he turned the Queen from a dead-pan critic into a push-over stooge.

Barnum went to England with another hope and another hoax from his series of smart frauds in America. On the streets of Bridgeport he had found an undersized youngster playing—a kid of five who had the size of a new-born baby.

Phineas T. bought the midget and his mother's care for \$3 a week, which he raised to \$7, then to \$25, while he made from ten to a hundred times that amount out of the attraction. Barnum stole an idea from some medieval minstrel and called the midget, whose real name was Charles Stratton—General Tom Thumb. At his American Museum in New York he built up Tom Thumb and made him a genuine attraction—with only a little helpful lying as to age and dimensions.

Stratton (Tom Thumb) was an extraordinary little person. He spoke well, wrote fairly well, and had genuine histrionic talent as a very young boy. Barnum exploited it to the utmost. He inspired stories to be sent across the seas, and worked up what was then a tremendous ballyhoo of the demand for the crowned heads of Europe to see General Tom Thumb.

FOUND ON TOM

On the steam-packet Yorkshire he took General Tom Thumb to England. A multitude of ten thousand saw them off at the dock. But arrived in Liverpool, Barnum became suddenly disconsolate. The English were not very excited about General Tom Thumb. Indeed, one veteran English showman advised Barnum that he couldn't expect much more than a penny a head for admission to see the General. Barnum had been getting twenty-five cents admission in New York.

Having taken Horace Greeley's reversed-English advice, Go East, Young Man, Go East—for Greeley, author of the Go West, Young Man, shibboleth, had told Barnum there was money to be made by an astute showman in Europe—having got to Europe, Barnum was not easily dissuaded. Greeley had given Barnum a letter of introduction to the American Ambassador, the ice-spined Edward Everett—who was exceedingly cold turkey to other callers, but took up Barnum on account of Greeley's recommendation.

Through Everett, society took up Tom Thumb, and the powerful Baroness Rothschild made him a household pet. Then came the call from the Queen. A brilliant scene, Barnum carefully rehearsed by a major domo to talk to Her Majesty only through a third person—never directly—and to bow himself out backwards from the royal presence.

Victoria, Imperatrix, herself conducted General Tom Thumb about her picture gallery. The little fellow danced and sang for her, and gave his famed imitation of Napoleon Bonaparte in three frowns. The major domo was amazed. He was even more amazed when he was asked around to see Barnum chat familiarly with the Queen.

Paris, where they nicknamed him General Tom Pouce, and he became the toast of the Boulevards and a favorite of Louis-Philippe, the then reigning and subsequently ruined monarch.

General Tom Thumb himself bragged of his prowess—how he had been kissed by more than a million fair women, and conquered the crowds in every country he visited. Barnum made a fortune out of Thumb. And Phineas was fair. He gave Thumb a decent cut after the lad had gone over big in his various acts—ranging from Cupid to Atlas and Napoleon and the Dying Gladiator. Thumb retired rich, ending his days in comfort.

When Thumb was about finished, Barnum's alert fancy rushed to the



Barnum took General Tom Thumb to

Phineas T. had been busy. He had begged or bribed the editor of the Court Circular to print a large item about General Tom Thumb's visit to the Court. This was done and London and England began to talk about Tom Thumb.

All for Build-Up

But Barnum held back. He let him continue appearing at private, high-toned parties—at ten guineas a party. This was the build-up. To his astonishment, the Queen commanded Tom Thumb to appear before her again. Did Barnum exploit this? Indeed, indeed. Lord Wellington was there—the Iron Duke himself, with his iron chin. He watched Tom Thumb give his famous imitation of Napoleon.

"You look unhappy in that imitation," said the Duke. "I'm Napoleon thinking of you," said Tom Thumb to the hero of Waterloo. The whole world was informed of that stroke of wit—perhaps Tom Thumb's only quotable come-back.

Thumb became the rage. Barnum put him in the Egyptian Hall, London, and got his quarter, not a penny, a head from the customers. Competing with Tom Thumb was a famous British artist making a private exhibition of his paintings. Thumb drew \$2,500 weekly and more; the artist couldn't take in \$100. He killed himself, at this signal defeat in drawing-power by a freak.

Barnum took General Thumb to

other extreme. He had had experience with giants—he had two at one time, a thin giant and a fat giant. But they both fell in love with a lady—I think, a bearded lady—and had a fist fight in private. Barnum offered them high pay if they'd repeat their physical encounters in public.

The giants were not big box-office. But he conceived something more devastating than a human giant just a foot or two taller than normal men. He would unearth a prehistoric mammal. He did—the Cardiff giant—a mammoth man, petrified, and excavated from the tiny town of Cardiff, in York State.

This huge fabricated fossil weighed about four tons—but it began to give at the seams, through too much travel, and Barnum was smart enough to withdraw it from exhibition before it met with the same mockery as his celebrated slogan: This way to the Egress, which was a deceptive method of emptying one house rapidly to make way for the next.

Barnum himself boldly admitted the Cardiff Giant to be among his humbugs, for once when he wrote to a friend counselling him how to collect a show he advised him to get a Cardiff Giant that wouldn't break.

But if his fancies and fakes made him the Arch-Chairman of the Ananias Club—in Barnum unexcelled as a swindler? Sad to relate, no. For Barnum's bunk was amusing, and there remain many, very many, brands of swindling that are not.

Fletcher.

Agricultural Commissioner William A. Graham was appointed by Governor Morrison to succeed his father; Insurance Commissioner Daniel C. Boney was appointed by Governor McLean to succeed Stacey Wade, resigned; State Treasurer Charles Johnson was appointed by Governor Gardner to succeed Nathan O'Berry; Associate Justice Heriot Clarkson and George W. Connor were appointed by Governor Morrison; Associate Justice W. J. Brogden was appointed by Governor McLean, and Associate Justice Michael Schenck was appointed by Governor Ehringhaus. All of these appointees of Governors have since been elected by the people.

The law provides for the selection of the State highway chairman by the State Highway Commission, but

in practice appointment is made by the Governor. The State health officer is named by the State Board of Health. The commissioner of revenue is appointed by the Governor. Because of the devastation of death, the Governor must now appoint an attorney general to serve until the next election.

The Governor found a ready response in the hearts of legislators to his appeal that steps must be taken to decrease the slaughter on the highways. He suggested a drivers' license, not for the purpose of securing revenue, but to keep reckless drivers off the highways. Both he and the members of the Legislature feel that it is high time the vigorous steps be taken to check the death toll of three and four a day on North Carolina highways. Only a few years ago, it was only two a week, and that was considered then a highly dangerous tendency. Now more people are killed in a month on the highways in North Carolina than were formerly killed in a year.

Governor Ehringhaus urged the Legislature not to divert funds from the motor license taxes for purposes other than the maintenance of the highways. This will be the occasion for much debate. Many legislators would like to dip into that fund for money with which to pay other bills. A strong lobby has been organized to prevent diversion. Much will be

heard in the Legislature on this subject.

While the majority of the members of the Legislature are fresh from the people, they re-elected experienced clerks to look after the routine. Thad Eure, principal clerk of the House, is conducting a daily school in legislating. There is a large attendance. The legislators are taking their jobs seriously.

Miss Mary Koonce Honored By Party

Mrs. B. G. Koonce was hostess to a number of young people on Saturday night, when she entertained in honor of the sixteenth birthday of her attractive daughter, Miss Mary Wood Koonce, with William E. White, Jr., whose seventeenth birthday fell on the same date, as a guest of honor.

Many delightful and entertaining games were played, followed by dancing, after which dainty refreshments of ice cream and cake were served.

Those present included, in addition to the two honorees, Misses Prue Newby, Jeannette Fields, Edith Everett, Joyce Harrell, Mattie Bert Relfe, Katherine Stephens, Edna Ruth Cannon, Ona Mary Stephens, Ruth Nachman, Katherine Jessup, Mary Feild, Polly Tucker, Mary Thad Chappell, Martha Elizabeth Jordan, Eula Nixon, Grace Knowles, Bernice White, Vir-

ginia White, Ruth Robinson, Frances Lamb, Carolyn Lamb, Mary Temple, Jane Marfitt, Sara Ward, Jean White, Katherine Winslow, Hilda Hobbs, Naomi Spivey, Frances Perrow and Mable Spivey; Hollowell Cox Nixon, William Hardcastle, Francis Jessup, Tim Rufus Brinn, Roy Reed, William Feild, and Eldon Winslow.

JUDGE COWPER AT ROTARY

Judge G. V. Cowper, of Kinston, who was in Hertford this week to conduct the January term of Perquimans Superior Court, was guest speaker at the Rotary meeting Tuesday night.

Lost 20 Lbs. of FAT In Just 4 Weeks

A St. Louis, Mo., lady wrote: "I'm only 28 years old and weighed 170 lbs. until taking one box of your Kruschen Salts just 4 weeks ago. I now weigh 150 lbs. I also have more energy and furthermore I've never had a hungry moment."

Fat folks should take one-half teaspoonful of Kruschen Salts in a glass of hot water every morning before breakfast—a quarter pound jar lasts 4 weeks—you can get Kruschen at Anderson's Drug Store or any drug store in America. If not joyfully satisfied after the first bottle—money back.



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U. S. No. 61 Hames, per pair **\$1.25**

Plow Traces, per pair **75c**

Webb Back Bands and Buckles **25c**

Leather Back Bands **85c**

12-yard Plow Lines **33c**

12-in. Yellow Collar Pads **45c**

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Glancing At The General Assembly

By M. L. SHIPMAN

Raleigh, Jan. 14.—It has been said that death loves a shining mark, and so it would seem in the case of North Carolina State officials. Attorney General Brummitt, stricken down in his 53rd year, is the fourth State official to die within a period of seven months. Associate Justice William J. Adams of the Supreme Court died last spring and in rapid succession followed the deaths of State Superintendent of Public Instruction Arch T. Allen and State Health Officer J. M. Parrott. State Highway Chairman E. B. Jeffress was stricken with a

critical illness last fall, necessitating his retirement the first of the year.

Devastation of State officialdom by the grim reaper in recent years calls attention sharply to the fact that the short ballot about which there was so much argument during the Gardner administration is now a reality. With exception of Governor Ehringhaus and Chief Justice Stacy, of the Supreme Court, there are now only three State officers who were originally elected by the people. These are Secretary of State Stacey W. Wade, State Auditor Baxter Durham and State Commissioner of Labor A. L.