

Murder in Plain Sight

by GERALD BROWN

Duke McCale, private detective, is engaged by wealthy old Miss Bigelow, to guard her niece's wedding presents. McCale guesses there is something sinister in the situation, and so accepts. He meets Mrs. Sybil Bigelow, the bride's mother, Victoria and Stephen Bigelow, the bride's brother and sister, and Mrs. Stephen Bigelow, a strikingly beautiful blonde woman. Later he becomes acquainted with Christopher Storm, a noted architect, who is too inquisitive to let McCale go. Then he meets Veronica, the bride-to-be, an attractive and intelligent girl, and the bridegroom-to-be, the extremely handsome Curt Vallancourt, big and masterful. He gives Veronica a strange, meaningful glance.

CHAPTER IV

When Curt began to take his leave, he doled himself out. Stephen he treated like a brother. Storm as an affectionate friend. It was the women who bit at his heels most avidly. Miss Adelaide glowed, turned coy. Sybil shook herself out of the sulks, simpered. Victoria looked at him hotly, and Karen's eyes kindled with an icy fire.

Veronica waited tolerantly, as if she could well afford to do so. He crossed to her finally in his negligently graceful stride. He took her hands in his big ones and, leaning over, whispered in her ear. She laid her bronze head against the massiveness of his chest for a moment.

Everyone must have heard her say, "... But it's all right now, darling. All right. I'm so glad—I was devastated."

Victoria's eyes were half-closed, mere pencil strokes in her Beardsley face, and Karen's only movement was the tapping of a carmine fingernail on the arm of her chair.

Curt kissed his fiancée. And then McCale knew. This was no acting in that kiss. There was no embrace in the thundering animal way of a Tarzan. This was not the selling power behind perfect merchandise. In spite of the stories, in spite of the man's reputation, he was really in love with Veronica Bigelow. It was in his eyes. It was unmistakable. How could anyone in that room not know it?

Then the party broke up. It was after that that Victoria laughed derisively, and in passing Christopher said slyly, "You big, big fool! To give them The Nest. Don't tell me you wanted to."

Christopher smiled in a depressed manner, got up and took her arm. As he headed for the door, McCale heard him say, "Calm yourself, Vicky, my girl. To the victor belongs the spoils." "Rats," she answered. "You're a congenial idiot."

Adelaide Bigelow had been snuffing out candles here and there. She switched off a table lamp and came over to McCale, who stood in the frelight, a dark figure, sorting his impressions. The old furniture and trappings seemed to flicker and dissolve in the half-light. The fire pulsed in the grate.

"You won't need me tonight?" he asked, as if it were finished.

"No—I think not—" she faltered. "Will you telephone me in the morning?"

"Of course."

"I shall need you," she said with emphasis. She looked older and more haggard in the gloom.

He nodded as she followed him to the door.

"I think I should have one of my operators on duty here tonight."

"Oh, no—it won't be at all necessary."

"—The wedding gifts." There was an oh-so-subtle tinge of sarcasm in his tone.

She smiled uncomfortably. "They'll be all right."

"Very well."

"He was outside, in the corridor. Mr. McCale."

"Yes."

"You saw the bridegroom. What do you think?"

He hesitated. "Very handsome." He knew that wasn't the answer she wanted.

"Is that all?"

"Character? I couldn't say. I simply recognize him as a type—one over which I'm not enthusiastic."

"Okay, boss. What's cooking?"

"Something—yes—but nothing that I can get my teeth into. I know there's something wrong, though."

"Do you want me to watch out for anything in particular?"

"No-o-o. Just keep your eyes and ears open. I won't even give you my reactions to the Bigelow clan. I want an unbiased opinion from you in the morning. You're supposed to be guarding those precious wedding gifts. Miss Bigelow will be expecting you at eight o'clock. Ask for her. You'd better run along now and get yourself some grub. Put Ann on the line, will you?"

"The power behind the throne," quipped Rocky, "took her royal departure at the stroke of six."

"Just like that?"

"Yeah. She had a wicked gleam in her eye when she sealed the note she left for you. I'll lay odds that she's up to some devilry."

"No doubt. Well, I'll be seeing you in the morning. Don't let any of 'em rattle you. Be seeing you, Night, now."

The desk light was on in the outer office. In the small, round pool of light it threw lay a note from Ann

Lights went down suddenly and a girl stepped into the yellow oval of a spot.

Marriot reminding him that he was taking her to dinner. She had underlined the final word—dinner.

He knew that forecast. It meant The White Abbey, the season's socially renowned "saloon."

He grunted, turned off the desk light, and went through the quiet inner office to his bedroom and bath at the back. He shaved and showered, dressing automatically, his mind busy in a treadmill of its own.

He went over the events of the afternoon, trying to docket his impressions in some way, to relate them to the dark omen he had carried away from there. He wished Rocky were with him now to talk it over.

He called a cab and rode cross-town, deep in the groove of his mood. They drove up to a row of old brownstone houses which looked deserted, their flat, unlighted fronts a deceptive sepia blank. One of them had an oyster-white door. McCale made for it.

Ann Sizes Up the Situation

After a wait of less than five minutes, Ann came from behind a door marked "Powder Room." She was slender and smart in a green draped affair that ended in a lot of gray foam. The gown had no straps that he could see and it seemed she might be rising out of it to be with him minus the surf she was riding at any moment.

They climbed one of the staircases and were bowed into the diners' room by another interior decorator. There was a lot of diffused light in here which made it rather better, although the white pre-ferred. They sat on one of a number of semi-circular velvet divans which formed a series of alcoves around the room.

They lingered over the exorbitantly priced dinner, McCale preoccupied, bored by the place.

"All right," Ann said finally. "It's not so hot—but I had to see it."

"What do you really think of it?"

"It's fascinating—dull. However, that's what it will be like when you marry me. Your week will be all mapped out for you. I'll want to dress up one night and go out to the place of the moment; a regular night for the movies; then we'll have to take in all the good plays; maybe go dancing and—"

"Which leaves—"

"One night a week for me to sit by the fire at your feet while you discuss the intricacies of your latest case. Yes, I know. You're full of the blasted Bigelows now. Tell me all."

"I hope that's only your way of telling me that you're burning up with curiosity."

"And so I am."

He lit a cigarette and start-

ed to feature carefully the affair Bigelow as far as it went.

When he finally paused, she said, "No more?"

"No more."

"So far as I can see from where we're sitting then, there isn't any mystery unless it's your Irish hunch."

"Have I ever been wrong?"

"Oh, you must have been, once or twice."

"But I swear there is something going on there—some deep trouble. I tell you, the whole family has the jumps. They're shaky, nervy—out of sorts. It sticks out like a sore thumb."

Ann selected a salted nut and bit into it with her strong white teeth. She said, an amused look in her eyes, "What sticks out is that the whole family is crazy about the gorgeous Curt. And he takes the one with the money. He must be quite a boy."

"I assure you he is. Can't you just see them all from my description? The old lady at wit's end; Sybil drowning something or other in sherry; Karen cold and lax, taking it out on the piano; Veronica dazed; Victoria cruel and fighting back; Stephen lost and floundering. Why—"

"Of course, darling. I see them all."

"But what do you think?"

"I think you're smitten with this Karen wench."

McCale roared. "Good Lord, are you jealous? Of me? Now, see here—"

"If course I'm jealous, you wretch." She wagged a finger at him, then pointed. "And here, if I'm not mistaken, comes another member of our cast."

Lights went down suddenly and a girl stepped into the yellow oval of a spot. She was dressed in some silver business so cunningly draped that it turned her into a shimmering pillar. She had a wide raspberry mouth and dark brown hair with strange lights in it. The saxophones wailed and subsided to a moan. The drums were a tom-tom accompaniment. She stood perfectly still, a cigarette hanging from the corner of her mouth while she sang. Her voice was a husky contralto and she wrenched the lyrics from the commonplace into the realm of the bouffier. It was top-notch old-school singing.

"Wow!" exclaimed McCale. "That's showmanship. What were you saying, my pet, when Love Walked In?"

"That was Shari Lynn."

McCale raised an eyebrow. The girl had walked out onto the floor again to take a bow. She accepted the acclaim in the same slow, sultry way she had sung.

"I hope you won't go into a jealous rage if I say I think she's got something there," said McCale slyly.

"Not at all. She's got something with her, too, if you'll look where she's headed."

McCale turned and saw the top of a curly black head, the set of unmistakable shoulders. He whispered under his breath.

"Curt Vallancourt," he murmured.

Ann sighed. "So that's the boy himself. I can certainly see why the girls drop their handkerchiefs whenever he goes by."

"I'll admit he's handsome."

"Handsome, darling, is not the word for it."

"Ann, I'm ashamed of you. I did not dream that girls—"

"You listen to me instead. Almost any man with a lot of money is on the hunt for the best deal he can buy. What's the matter with a woman who's got a few million lying around loose buying herself a gorgeous piece of freight—like that?"

He was shocked, even though he knew she was enjoying his reactions.

Curt Goes to the Highest Bidder

"That's just it," was his rejoinder. "It's just the fact that it's merchandise that makes it so—so cheap."

"Well, it's perfect merchandise, and any woman—"

"Women are supposed to have morals."

"Phooey, darling. What a million dollars or a real milk will do to a gal's morals just isn't funny."

Spotlight

by GRANTLAND RICE

FOOTBALL is moving in the direction of its record year. I am referring here to class and talent from over 40 football states. There has been no season before that could show as many fast and powerful teams, due partly to returning G.I.s from the various battlefields of the world. Any one team that can finish this season unbeaten must call on a miracle. There are too many who are good.

For example we might as well take up the matter of All-America backs. We brought this argument up before a group of coaches recently.

"That's simple enough," one of them said. "Why not pick Blanchard, Davis, Wedemeyer and Gilmer?"

"It isn't quite that simple," we countered. "What about Fenimore, Buddy Young and Trippi? What about Tucker of Army or Justice of North Carolina? What about the best back on Michigan, Ohio State or Indiana? Or Patterson of Illinois? What about the pick from Notre Dame and Pennsylvania or Columbia, or one or two from the Southwest, including Texas and Missouri? Certainly Notre Dame should come up with a challenger from the group Frank Leahy has in tow, perhaps Johnny Lujack."

"If anyone is trying to pick the four best," another coach said, "why not put eight names in a hat and pick out the first four?"

"Which eight?" I asked.

"Well," the answer came, "here are seven anyway—Blanchard, Davis, Wedemeyer, Fenimore, Gilmer, Trippi and Buddy Young. You dig up the other."

Columbia's Backs

You can imagine how the argument will be in late November. For example, it might surprise many camp followers from the strong Midwest and the strong South to know that Lou Little at Columbia may end up with a better all-around backfield than Notre Dame, Michigan, Indiana, Ohio State, Alabama, Georgia and Texas. The line isn't there but the backs are, headed by Rossides, Kusserow and the brilliant passer Kasprzak, rated by Lou on a par with Luckman and Governali.

With two big tackles, Columbia could give Army, Alabama or Notre Dame an even scrap. But the line is still the front wall. It is the advance post. And Columbia so far hasn't the line needed to face such a schedule.

My guess is that Army has the best first line backfield in football, with something to spare. This backfield, in addition to Blanchard and Davis, includes a brilliant quarterback and a fine passer in young Tucker. You'll hear a lot more about Tucker this fall than you ever heard before. He can move right up with Blanchard and Davis.

Alabama, Columbia and Oklahoma A and M have all-around backfield strength above the normal. So has Illinois with an attack headed by Young and Patterson, two of the best.

I believe the strongest lines are at Illinois, Yale, Notre Dame and Alabama. Notre Dame may have the best of the lot, but Yale isn't far behind. Alabama has a great center in Mancha, one of the best in many years. Illinois possesses top guards and Notre Dame has the best looking tackles.

Oklahoma, Yale Lines

It might be added here that the Oklahoma A and M line is one of the best—a point Wally Butts of Georgia might remember for their October meeting. Yale's line is strong from end to end. Texas has all-around strength, backfield and line, and should be hard to handle in the country's major state.

The two best ends of the year should belong to Army in Barney Poole and Foldberg, veterans around 218 pounds who know what it is all about. They will have to be better than good with the tackle problem Army faces. Some squad may have two better ends than Army's big, experienced pair—but I doubt it.

Among the major teams the big guess is Navy. Capt. Tom Hamilton, undoubtedly the savior of college football through war years, is as good a coach as you'll meet anywhere. But Navy has lost more good men than any team in the country. The group of supposed stars under Swede Hagberg two years ago have either graduated, flunked or resigned.

Hamilton has little left from that old crew—Kelly, Scott, Minisi, Jenkins, Ellsworth, and on and on, are all gone. Most of the Navy line is missing. But Hamilton still has good football players left, not too many, but enough to give any team a busy afternoon.

Navy took the major rap in post-war football. Where most of the others were getting their former stars back, Navy was taking a heavy deficit. Navy may lose many games. More than two or three. But these games will be fought to the last play with Tom Hamilton in charge.

BUSINESS & INVEST. OPPOR.

Real opportunity for a permanent business and income of your own selling established line of Health Food and Vitamins in this territory. Liberal commission. Small investment for merchandise required. For particulars write Makers of KAL, 256 North New Hampshire, Los Angeles 4, California.

DOGS, CATS, PETS, ETC.

PUPPIES WANTED

We have puppies of all kinds, also kittens, canaries, parrots, etc. Give description and lowest dealer's price in first letter.

GERMAN SHORTHAIR POINTER PUPS

4 and 5 months old, \$15.00 without papers, \$25.00 with papers. Best of breeding. Cliff's Kennels, Brewster, Nebraska.

FARM MACHINERY & EQUIP.

VEE-BELTS AND PULLEYS for all farm machinery. Sheller and hammermill belt drives. Pillow blocks and cables.

HAY, GRAIN, FEED

WANTED—NEW OR OLD ALFALFA FRANK HOWLAND, 6220 S. 44th St., Phone Market 1899 - Omaha, Nebraska.

HELP WANTED—MEN

PAINTERS. Established shop of 50 years can use experienced white A. F. of L. building painters for all types of work on year-round employment. Ideal shop conditions. Inquiries by mail invited.

WANTED

Registered Pharmacist or assistant to work in one of the better drug stores in Nebraska as assistant manager. Salary Greene's Drug Store, Falls City, Neb.

HELP WANTED—WOMEN

WE NEED SEVERAL WOMEN to work in the Home. Ladies who know how to work and are interested in children. Having had children of one's own, teaching experience, etc., are good qualifications.

LIVESTOCK

Hereford Hogs. We are breeders and shippers of better Hereford hogs, tried sows, fall gilts, weaners, etc. Write for prices.

MISCELLANEOUS

For Sale—Prairie hay, truck or car, at all times. Write for prices. Frank Keller, Newport, Neb.

HELP WANTED—MALE

BRICKLAYERS wanted immediately on project at Boytown, Nebraska. Approximately 18 months' work. Inside work for winter. Scale, \$1.85 per hour working 45 hours per week. Double time for all overtime. Apply Peter Klewitt Sons Co., Boytown, Nebraska.

CERTIFIED Pawnee wheat

by the sack, truckload, or carload, at \$2.25 f. o. b. Polk County, Neb. Write for prices. Polk County Crop Improvement Association, Box 2, Osceola, Neb.

hear clearly

AND SAVE MONEY with Fresh Long-Life Midget & Standard Batteries for most HEARING-AIDS

—Mailed Direct To You— Write for Booklet—or Batteries Sonolone 618 World-Herald Bldg. Omaha

Relief At Last For Your Cough

Creomulsion relieves promptly because it goes right to the seat of the trouble to help loosen and expel germ laden phlegm, and aid nature to soothe and heal raw, tender, inflamed bronchial mucous membranes. Tell your druggist to send you a bottle of Creomulsion with the understanding you must like the way it quickly always the cough or you are to have your money back.

CREOMULSION

for Coughs, Chest Colds, Bronchitis

BUILD UP RED BLOOD TO GET MORE STRENGTH

If your blood LACKS IRON!

You girls and women who suffer so from simple anemia that you're pale, weak, dragged down by the weight of your blood-iron. So try Lydia E. Pinkham's TABLETS—one of the best home ways to build up red blood—in such cases Pinkham's Tablets are one of the greatest blood-iron tonics you can buy! At all druggists. Worth trying!

That Nagging Backache

May Warn of Disordered Kidney Action

Modern life with its hurry and worry, irregular habits, improper eating and drinking—the risk of exposure and infection—throws heavy strain on the work of the kidneys. They are apt to become over-taxed and fail to filter acids and other impurities from the life-giving blood.

You may suffer nagging backache, headache, dizziness, getting up nights, leg pains, swelling—feel constantly tired, nervous, all worn out. Other signs of kidney or bladder disorder are sometimes burning, scanty or too frequent urination.

Try Doan's Pills. Doan's help the kidneys to pass off harmful excess body waste. They have had more than half a century of public approval. Are recommended by grateful users everywhere. Ask your neighbor!

DOAN'S PILLS

Washington Digest

Life in Soviet Russia Lacks Utopian Promise

By BAUKHAGE
News Analyst and Commentator.

WNU Service, 1616 Eye Street, N.W., Washington, D. C.

WASHINGTON, D. C.—As relations between the western world and Russia grow rapidly more bitter, many reports are coming in to show that Communism, which reached the peak of its prestige with the end of the war, is losing some of its popularity in Europe.

The lack of proof provided in the eating of the Soviet pudding has had its effects, and many a wail of anguish is dimly audible behind the iron curtain which stretches from the Baltic through the Balkans.

This, of course, doesn't prevent our own little family of loyal American "Commies" from screaming the praises of all within the Soviet's gates.

I have been looking over some facts concerning two of the great postwar American problems—housing and union labor demands—with an eye on similar conditions in Russia.

Nobody but an optimist with rose-colored glasses and a five-year lease would say that we have no housing problem in America. But Stalin has one in Russia too. And how, To-varish! (Don't answer me now, there's a plain clothes man behind the samovar.) I know about that letter workers wrote to Uncle Joe, pledging their tireless work and a promise to "liquidate all shortcomings" on the housing industry. That word "liquidate" has an unpleasant sound. And when Russian papers are allowed to criticize production, putting the blame on "local Soviets," it means—the situation needs criticizing!

But what were Russian housing conditions before the war?

According to a recent Library of Congress report, "Communism in Action," even before the devastation of western Russia the average floor space in Moscow was only 45 square feet per head. But the privileged (workers with high records on the speed-up plan) had much more. Hence, the ordinary Russian worker had much less. By way of contrast in Washington, D. C., under the National Capital Housing authority, the smallest housing unit (a one-bedroom apartment) must allot 165 square feet to the living room alone, and the total space must be 250 square feet.

In Russia the usual arrangement is one family per room in a six-room apartment with common use of the kitchen and bathroom.

Figure Out Floor Space Per Person

This was the situation before the war. Today, in the Ukraine, according to an article in Harper's by John Fischer, who spent some months in the Ukraine and Byelo Russia with UNRRA, conditions are such that the Russian press may well be allowed to criticize—if that will do any good.

In Kiev, says Fischer, a person is supposed to have six square meters of living space, which is a strip of floor about ten feet long and six feet wide. Less than that is available in Kharkov.

If you want to know how a typical family in the Ukraine lives, Fischer tells you to imagine you and your wife and children occupying the smallest room in your house, with the clothing, beds, furniture and possessions that are absolutely indispensable. You'll have a brick stove instead of a radiator or cooking range, a bathroom with no hot water shared by several other families—and probably a few relatives to share all that!

Probably you could stand this if you knew it was temporary. But in Russia, according to Fischer, because of the five-year plan for the expansion of heavy industry (said to be a part of Soviet war preparation), Russians are going to have a bitterly hard life as far as consumer goods and facilities go, for another 10 to 15 years.

I can't verify Fischer's views, but I know that authorities agree that Russia cannot possibly do much to raise the standard of living of the less privileged even if she doesn't continue the present military preparation.

And what has Communism done for the laborer as such? Under the five-year plan industri-

al workers' pay is supposed to go up to 500 rubles a month. Fischer estimates the present rate at between 300 and 350, which he says amounts in terms of American purchasing power to about \$30 to \$35.

Labor Unions Under Government Wing

According to "Communism in Action" (the U. S. government document I mentioned earlier) the Russian labor unions started out under Trotsky as independent, fighting organs of labor. But when Trotsky was ousted and made his very hasty departure from the Utopia he helped found, one lap ahead of the liquidators, things changed. As in the case of Nazi Germany the union became a limb of the party.

And no one would say that American unions, like the Russian variety, "are not organized to conduct strikes." This is reported by "Communism in Action," which says that there hasn't been a strike in Russia since 1921. The document further points out that unions in the United States have as their primary purpose the privilege of their members, to deal on equal terms with their employers on all matters of mutual interest.

In the U.S.S.R., on the other hand, the unions are a part of the apparatus of the employer (the government) and since the government is supposed to act in the interests of all, the workers can't complain against any of its decisions.

Tough Sledding For the 'Ins'

There seems to be agreement between some of the political leaders of both parties that the voters are going to indulge in a good deal of indiscriminate hurling of brickbats next month and it is entirely likely that many an innocent, bystander congressman is going to suffer for the sins of his colleagues. Clarence Brown, No. 2 man in the Republican national committee, admitted to me that he was counting heavily on the "throw the rascals out" vote.

On other words people are going to take out their various personal grouches on the incumbent, regardless of record or party affiliation. This view was reflected on the Democratic side by that experienced politician, Senator Russell of Georgia. He said to some of us the other day:

"It's always like this after a war. A great many people have complaints of one kind or another. It's a natural thing for many of them to decide to vote against the people who have been in office."

That line of reasoning, when pursued by a good Democrat, might be wishful thinking if he were casting his eyes at the gubernatorial contest in New York state. Many people take for granted that Governor Dewey, if he wins, will try to use re-election as a stepping stone toward the presidential nomination.

In any case, the way the issues are being played now, if Dewey is re-elected, it will strengthen the arguments the Republicans are emphasizing that the next presidential campaign will be "safety and solidity" versus "wild-eyed radicalism."

Issues will be joined on this point by the National Citizens Political Action committee (CIO-PAC's twin) when the latter makes the following statement at the conference of "progressives" in Chicago at the end of the month:

"The November elections will decide the nation's future—the independent voters... will determine whether the voice of privilege, of hate and bigotry will dominate the 80th congress, as they did the old, or whether the progressives who fought against great odds in the 79th congress will find new allies."

The Republicans are offering themselves as "new allies" by making the claim that they represent true liberalism, and telling the "progressives" that they must either choose the Republican brand of "liberalism" or support the so-called "radicalism" of the Democrats.

Evidence to support the view that the "ins" whether they are Democrats or Republicans, are going to get the brickbats from disgruntled voters was contained in a letter recently received by two Democrat "ins."

"There just aren't any diapers," an expectant, incensed father wrote to his congressman, "and it's someone's fault. Regardless of where and how you place the blame, you represent us in our government which has allowed this national disgrace to come about and are, therefore, to a greater or a lesser degree, personally responsible for it!"

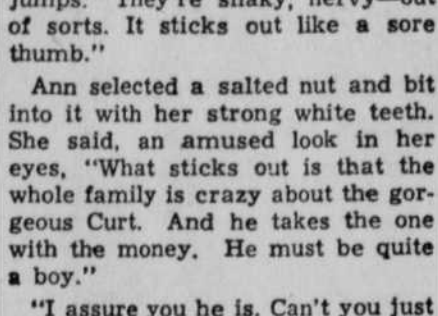
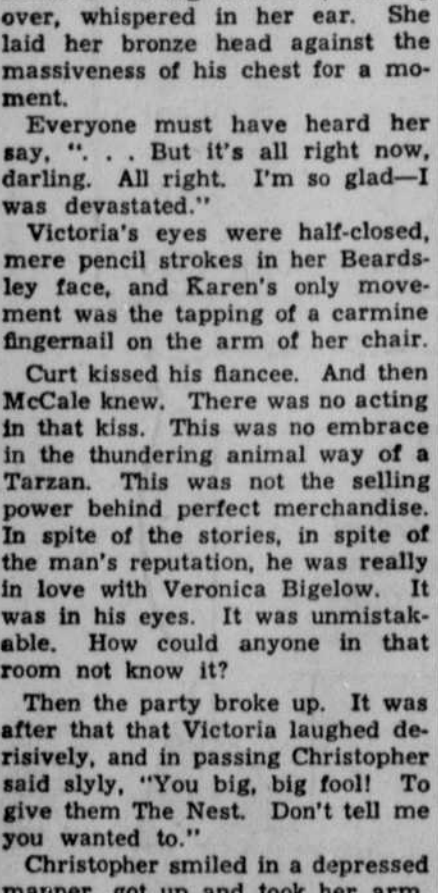
BARBS . . . by Baukhage

A Kentucky physician received a tribute from his townsfolk the other day for delivering 5,492 babies in 47 years. And not a wrong address in a pram-load.

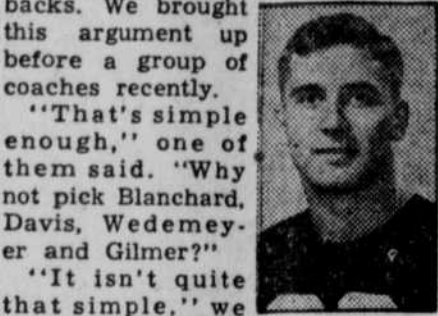
An 84-year-old mountaineer whose 31-year-old wife had a nine pound baby wants the government to increase his old age pension. Not with those young ideas!

Terminal leaves end just like the ones that grow on trees.

A short circuit which tied up the telegraph line in Lombard, Mont., was caused by a big fish lodged on the cross-arm of a telegraph pole. Probably dropped by a fish-hawk which didn't realize there were some currents even a fish couldn't swim against.



John Lujack



John Lujack

