

SEEN and HEARD around the NATIONAL CAPITAL

By Carter Field
FAMOUS WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT



Washington. — Governor Alfred M. Landon is being overwhelmed with conflicting advice as to how he should conduct his campaign. If he still retains the calmness and good nature that his old friends admire, by the time election rolls around he will have graduated into the superman class. More likely there will be some kind of blow-up, with advisors dropping away from his train, from Topeka, and from Estes Park, in a procession resembling the desertions from the train of Queen Marie of Roumania when she toured this country.

But of course there is no telling at this stage which particular group of advisors will be dropped or pushed overboard in the time remaining of the campaign.

Landon's natural impulse, and his calculated thought so far, is to make a very dignified campaign, not striving for oratorical effects, not pretending he has a cure-all for the nation's ills, and developing the theme that was so successful in his pre-convention campaign—that he is a "Kansas Coolidge."

Many of his old advisors agree that this is shrewd strategy. They like the idea of such a contrast with Franklin D. Roosevelt. They point out that in the first place Landon could not possibly beat the President at his own game, especially as Roosevelt is recognized as having just about everything it takes to make a perfect orator. He not only has the voice, but he is a good actor, has a marvelous sense of dramatic, and has developed "timing"—even more important in oratory than in golf—in an amazing degree.

There simply is not time, these advisors point out, to bring Landon up within striking distance of Roosevelt's near perfection as a speaker, either before a multitude or before a microphone.

Some Disappointed

Those who insist on Landon's changing his style admit his limitations as an orator. They admit that probably the Kansas governor just cannot be made to change his voice, and that while he is a little better now than he was last spring, his timing is still rather bad.

This, they insist, is hopeless, but just because that is true is no reason why the governor should not put more punch in his speeches. They stress the failure of the governor to "measure up," as they put it, to expectations on his recent eastern tour.

Much had been expected by the country, they insist, of that particular trip. And they further contend that the country, to put it very mildly indeed, was far from thrilled at the governor's orations—either his set speeches or his short back platform talks.

So they want the governor to take off his gloves and start trading punches with Roosevelt. Not by pure oratory, but by smashing charges, alternated with simple promises of what he will do, if elected, to correct the situations he assails.

That course, and that only, they insist, will give Landon a chance to beat the New Deal.

But that, insist what might be called the old school of Landon's advisors, is just what the Democrats want. The New Dealers, they say, want Landon to talk a lot so they can shoot at him. They have the best propaganda machine in the world, and are all set to tear the G. O. P. nominee to pieces. Whereas so far they have been deprived of a target.

Of course to the old political hand it is obvious that the G. O. P. machine should concentrate its fire on Roosevelt, while Landon should confine himself very largely to constructive statements as to what he will do if elected—being very careful on the last not to take in too much territory, so as not to alienate any of the widely differing groups now held together by a common belief that New Deal policies spell ruin in the long run.

Theory Upset

James A. Farley may be building up to an awful let-down in his theory that folks will not bite the hand that's feeding them. He certainly is if the election recently in Knox county, Tennessee, is anything of a weather-vane.

Farley was counting on the fact that some 3,000 Tennessee Valley Authority workers have been living in Knoxville for the last three years, and that his efficient local organization had seen to it that most of them were registered—and gotten to the polls on election day.

But they didn't vote RIGHT. Knox county rolled up the biggest Republican majority in its history for the Republican candidate for sheriff, and, for the first time since 1918—the year Woodrow Wilson appealed for a Democratic Congress—elected a solid Republican county ticket.

Just before the August 6 election Gordon Browning, Democratic nominee for governor, addressed a mass meeting in Knoxville. He told the assembled Democracy that President Roosevelt was more interested in Knox county than any other in the United States. He told them he was going to take great pleasure,

the day after election, in wiring President Roosevelt the results.

Knox county folks are wondering if he did. They are a little surprised that the newspapers up North failed to pay any attention to their little battle down almost under the shadow of TVA's Norris Dam. They had thought, from what Mr. Browning and other Democratic leaders had told them, that the whole country would be reverberating next day with this "barometer" on national sentiment.

But they found out that the rest of the country is still wondering what Maine will do on September 14, and no one cares, apparently, that TVA workers did not vote Democratic.

The figures are rather interesting. J. Carroll Cate, regular Republican nominee for sheriff, received 16,061 votes to 10,873 for his Democratic opponent, J. D. Val Crippen, while an independent Republican candidate, received 2,658 votes.

Beat Farley Man

Nor was this the only shock that the New Deal received that day. For apparently the whole force of the state organization, both United States Senators, and what help Jim Farley could bring to bear was concentrated on nominating Burgin E. Dossett for governor. Whereupon the Democrats of the state beat Mr. Dossett by 135,000.

This figure, however, reflects nothing with respect to the sentiment of Tennessee on the New Deal. The victor, Gordon Browning, had been beating his breast almost as vehemently as Mr. Dossett in protesting his entire loyalty to it. In fact it was Mr. Browning who tried so hard to arouse the Knox county Democracy in general and the TVA workers in particular to do their utmost in Knox County's "weather-vane" election.

All that this Tennessee primary proves, it would seem, is that even the alphabetical agencies, added to ordinary political organization, do not always decide the day in a primary fight.

Tennessee Republicans, of course, are jubilant. They insist that this spells a revolt against Roosevelt. They insist that the Tennessee Democracy is fed up on the New Deal, and may throw the state to Landon in November.

Such an outcome is certainly not indicated by any polls which have been taken. All these place Tennessee safely in the Roosevelt column. But there is no escaping the point of the Knox county election, although it would not seem fair to apply it, pending the development of further facts, to communities in every state where large numbers of federal employees are able to vote.

The point would seem to be that regardless of the political character of their original appointments, these employees are apt to vote just as they please, regardless of the pleas and demands of their patronage benefactors.

Change Methods

Long range weather forecasting is an absolute necessity in working out either crop control or crop insurance, in the opinion of shrewd career men in the Department of Agriculture. Little has been done about this so far as the government is concerned, though as a matter of fact it has been advocated by the "permanent staff" of the Agricultural Department for more than ten years.

During this period certain large corporations have done a great deal of experimenting, in which the experts connected with the Agricultural Department took the keenest interest. Certain corporations, for example, employed Herbert J. Browne, now dead, who devoted his whole time, with considerable success, to long range weather predicting.

Browne was not interested in whether it would rain next week, or whether two months hence the crops would be burning up. He was interested in whether next summer would be hot or merely warm, what would be the approximate rainfall, and whether there would be plenty or a scarcity of snow winter after next.

Any attempt to explain his methods in detail would take the writer well out over his head into deep water, though he has listened time after time to Mr. Browne explain just how he did it. In substance, it has to do with the ice patches round the two poles and various other elements, which gradually produce situations resulting in cold or heat, rain or drought.

Two more feet on a glacier in northern Alaska or up north of Siberia today, for instance, would make all the difference in the world as to whether a certain wind, which may be blowing in Nebraska two years from now, will be blasting or cooling, and whether it will carry rain clouds or a dust storm.

Glaciers move slowly. Hence the possibility of calculating what they will do when they arrive at a certain place, moving at a known rate, though the movement is imperceptible to the eye.

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HELGOLAND



Fishermen of Helgoland.

Prepared by National Geographic Society, Washington, D. C.—WNU Service.

HELGOLAND is falling down" may be sung sadly to the tune of "London Bridge" if there is truth in reports that Germany is fortifying this pinhead stronghold in the North Sea. Firing great guns menaces the island more than any enemy, for at every big shot sections of its vertical sandstone sides plunk into the surrounding sea.

Like a triangular block of raspberry ice on a vast blue-green platter, Helgoland is melting away into the North sea. The island is literally crumbling away around its population of 2,500—mainly pilots, fishermen, or boarding-house-keepers. Here the Helgolanders try to hold together their island, their flourishing summer resort business, and their traditions on a small bare rock upon which would fit the Federal Triangle buildings along Pennsylvania avenue in Washington, without too much margin.

This sea-bitten morsel is the remotest of the Frisian islands, which water has gouged out from the northern coastline of Europe, and, within historic times, scrubbed down until reduced in size, or in some cases washed away altogether.

Broad submarine rocky ledges in the shoal area around Helgoland are submerged souvenirs of its former extent, estimated to be five times its present size, which is about one-fifth of a square mile. The island lost ground to the extent of about 250 square yards a year until 1892. Then the wave-worn western side was ringed around with a girdle of granite brought from the Danish island of Bornholm. Even thus protected, it is doomed within eight centuries, say the pessimists. More generous geologists give it about forty to go, but go they all agree it will.

After ages of erosion, what remains of Helgoland? A slice-of-pleashep-shaped wedge of red sandstone streaked with layers of chalk, swept by chill salt winds and incessantly gnawed by the North sea. Its dimensions are notable for their smallness, except the height; the sides rise sheer and dripping from the water to a flat top of 200 feet above sea level. Its importance lies in its position; as Germany's "Eye of the Empire", it watches over the equidistant mouths of the Weser, Jade, Elbe, and Eider rivers, commanding the harbors of Hamburg, Bremen, and Cuxhaven from a vantage point 28 miles from the nearest point of mainland.

Shattered by the World War

Yet Helgoland, with history practically in its hands, had been reported by astute observers as reluctant to make history and more concerned about making a living. Its experience during the World War proved that history is easy to make but hard to survive. Its scant pasture land was confiscated to build forts. Its rocky cliffs, of which there was already precious little, crumbled off and plunged seaward during artillery fire. The entire population was forced into four years of exile to make room for the military in 1914. When the living remnants returned in 1918, their peace was shattered by three years of blasting down fortifications in accordance with the Versailles treaty and the further trimming down of the island's slim sides. In 1922 and in desperation, Helgoland petitioned the League of Nations for neutrality. Scheduled for a perpetual bout with the sea, it finds any other country's fight just one too many.

Green, Red and White

Within its diminishing boundaries, it has three parts: the massive rock table of Oberland with its cornered tuft of town, the shoreline shelf projecting below like cap's visor with a second edition of town called Unterland, and the wisp of sandy Dune in tow a mile to the east. A thin green belt of pasture across the island's top completes the color triad which inspired the flag: "Green the land, red the rock, white the sand; These colors make the flag of Helgoland."

Like a toy village on the corner of a table, at Oberland's southeast point huddle blocklike houses, square and solid against the recurrent 80-mile gales. The flat skyline is broken by nothing more wind-catching than the pretentious little German postoffice of glazed brick and the spire added during Queen Victoria's reign to the Church of St. Nicholas, already centuries old. Around the cliff's edge stands a

row of boarding houses and hotels, offering to resorters the first sniff of salt breeze before it reaches natives on back streets. Through the town runs Kartoffallee, or Potato Lane, bisecting the island through garden patches of potatoes and cabbage, through pasture spots where graze a few sheep and goats, past the red and white cone of the lighthouse, to the little cafe on the northern point where the "Fog Cow" bellows warning every two minutes when the mists swirl low.

The lower town, lacking horses and vehicles of any sort, is not without its own method of rapid transit—namely, sliding down banisters. Men of Helgoland have been known to scorn the elevator operating between the cliff-top and the "down-town" level of the two-story town; they mount the iron hand railing of the stairway along the cliff's face and nonchalantly skid down to the foot of the precipice. Here in the shelter of the cliff, houses and shops cluster about a knot of six-foot-wide concrete streets.

Sun tan is the money crop of Helgoland. This is raised chiefly at the expense of summer visitors basking on the frail half-moon of barren beach of the Dune or Sand Island, apparently melting into the North sea a mile southeast of the main rock. Here has been located a tiny graveyard for nameless bodies washed up by the waves. Amputated by a seaquake in 1720, the Dune was previously joined to its rocky home base by the tall White Cliff of fine quality chalk, now visible as a reef at low tide. Chalk export, which occasionally attracted as many as a hundred ships to Helgoland's harbor at one time, grew so great that it killed the chalk that laid the golden egg; the White Cliff caved in during a storm and tumbled into the sea.

Its People Are Frisians

Inhabited by Frisians, a rugged race whom the Romans were proud to call allies, Helgoland remained independent of Europe's great kingdoms for centuries, resisting invasions even of Christianity. In fact, its lasting consecration to old Norse gods, especially Forseti, god of justice, may mean that its name developed from Helligeland, of Holy Land. Natives, however, call their island simply det Lunn, the Land. Although German is the official language, they speak a dialect of Frisian, which resembles ancient Anglo-Saxon.

During the Middle Ages it was theoretically controlled from the duchy of Schleswig, the duke even pawning it to a Hamburg merchant, but actually it was the irrepressible stronghold of those medieval maritime racketeers—pirates, brigands, and beachcombers. The Danes once got possession by threatening to hang all the men, whom they had kidnaped while out fishing, so that the women overthrew the small Schleswig garrison and proclaimed Danish allegiance. Thereafter, when improved water transportation gave it greater convenience, it has been constantly in demand and in use as a stepping stone for larger countries.

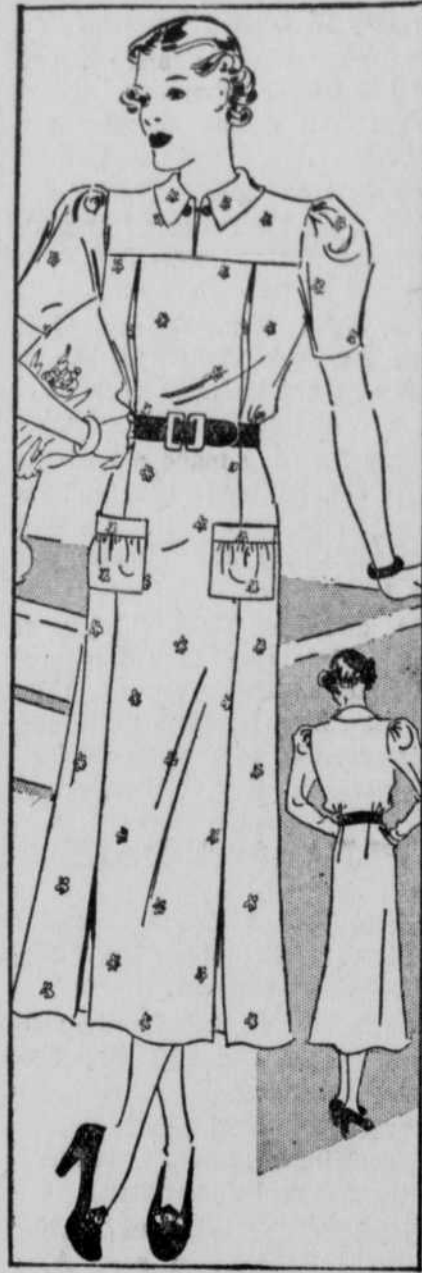
It was a valuable smuggling headquarters during the blockades of the Napoleonic wars. Then England sent seven ships to capture it, in September, 1807, like "plucking an apple hanging over a neighbor's wall"; Denmark finally relinquished claims to it after seven years.

Helgoland was traded in 1890 to Germany for Zanzibar, 3,000 times as large, and the exchange was compared to an entire suit of clothes swapped for a trouser button. But the trouser button demonstrated that it could serve a purpose of vital importance when it became one of the world's strongest fortresses during the World War. Not far away, on a misty morning in August, 1914, occurred the first serious naval clash of the war, when British victory littered the glassy smooth sea with wreckage.

Helgolanders acquired the habit of considering themselves fishermen at the start of the Fifteenth century, when a strange migration of herring brought them great harvests of fish for 200 years. An equally strange emigration of their source of income left them catching only a few lobsters.

Since the island's popularity as a summer resort began in 1828 with only a hundred resorters, the Helgolanders derive their year's income from renting themselves out as pilots and their homes as boarding houses for the season of two weeks.

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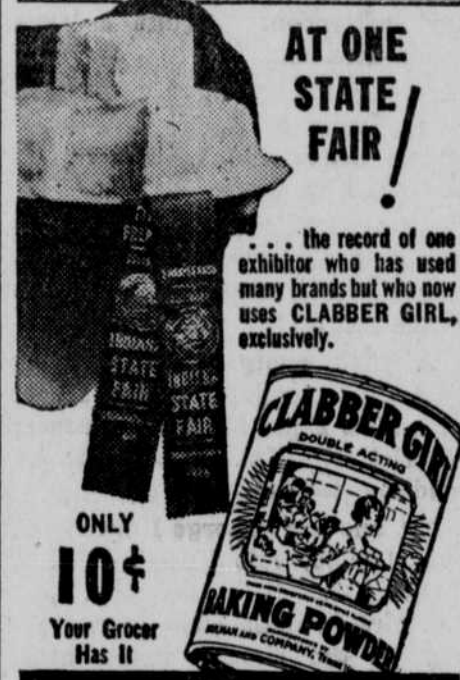
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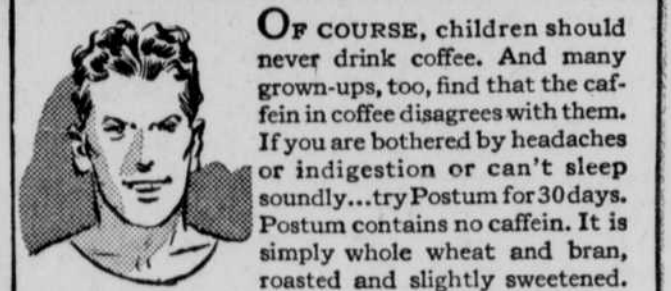
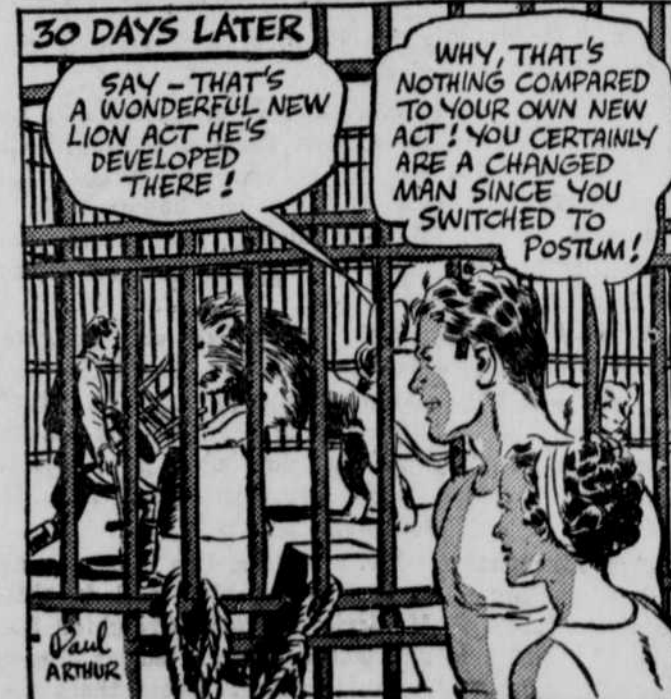
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