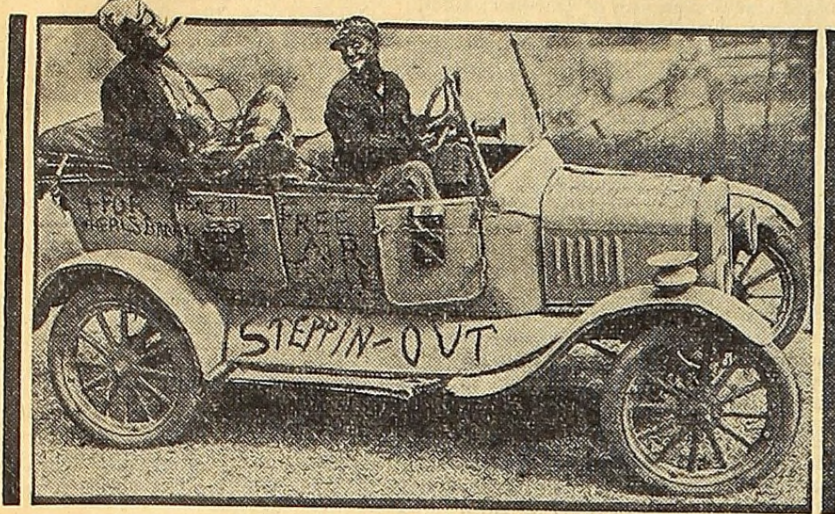


THE NOMADIC CIRCUS



Circus Clowns Cater to the Popular Fancy.

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

IN MIDSUMMER the circus season is at its height. Since early spring troupers have been donning their costumes daily, and trained animals from every corner of the globe in colorful trappings have delighted young and old.

Geographically, the circus has been a great educator. Long before automobiles, motion pictures, and radio broke down the barriers between isolated regions of the United States and the advancing world outside, the circus was taking its artists, its comedy, its music and its nomadic college of zoology into almost every state and territory. The world's largest circus might even advertise that it carries the original New York cast, because it takes on tour precisely the same show that opens in Madison Square garden.

Whatever else the peripatetic amusement venture is or is not, the fact remains that it is real. There are no circus "doubles" to perform the difficult feats, and there are no substitutes for those who may not feel "up" to the ordeal of two shows a day, "rain or shine." Years ago leaders in this field of entertainment learned that the formula for permanent survival included a whole-hearted attempt to give the public something it never had beheld before, surrounding it with a dazzling array of sustaining attractions. This hard-and-fast rule has persisted through the years, amid a procession of magic names: Jumbo, Tom Thumb; Chang, the Chinese Titan; Zachinn, human cannon ball; Tom Mix, whose Rough Riders carry the spirit of the old West to every state in the Union; Goliath, monster sea-elephant; Ubangi savages from Darkest Africa.

Because the circus is nomadic in its quest for business, it always has been of necessity a fighting institution. Therein lies one of its major bids for fame. Like a gay explorer who finds each day's journey a fresh problem to tackle, the circus struggles against a perfect maze of daily entanglements that threaten to ensnare it like a colossal Gulliver. The circus has battled the weather and it has fought grating officials who threaten to dig up some excuse for fining or tying up the show unless complimentary tickets fly thick and fast.

Huge Daily Overhead.
The managements for years have fought the argument that they take too much money out of town. People overlook the fact that every big circus spends a large sum in every city in which it plays. The daily overhead of the largest circus is in excess of \$15,000, and a considerable share of it is spent locally for lot and license, straw, lumber, ice cream, soft drinks, billing locations, and food for 600 horses, 36 elephants, four herds of camels, hippopotamuses, and other large appetites in the menagerie, as well as for the three meals a day of the show personnel, whose gastronomic requirements would stagger the chefs of a huge hotel. The commissary uses daily 250 pounds of butter, 200 pounds of coffee, 25 bags of table salt, almost a ton of fresh meat, 200 gallons of milk, 1,500 loaves of bread, 200 dozen eggs, half a ton of vegetables, a barrel of sugar, 50 pounds of lard, etc.

In the old days, before movement by railroad was general, traveling was much worse. Springtime found country roads impassable. Fourteen horses were needed to pull a hippopotamus den when circuses traveled overland in wagons. Circus laborers still shout "China!" occasionally when the train roars into the city of exhibition. This is a circus term of another generation. When a driver, seated atop the first wagon in the caravan, sighted the show's destination, he called "China" to indicate that after an all-night struggle they literally had dug their way through.

Rivalry Used to Be Fierce.
Previous to 1929 most of the big circuses battled with one another up and down the country from Maine to California and from Canada to the Gulf. Sometimes they employed the most vitriolic phrases in characterizing rival circuses as worthless. When electricity first was used to illuminate a circus tent, competitors solemnly warned the public to stay away from that show "because electric lights are known to be extremely dangerous and blinding to the eyes!"

Most interesting were the "paper wars" conducted by the big and little shows prior to the late summer of 1929. The big circuses often bought advertising space on barns and buildings in the dead of winter, so that the location would not be snapped up by rival concerns. Some of the shows had a playful little habit of covering

each other's posters when two shows saw fit to play the same city on the same day or a few days apart.

One of these paper wars became so intense when two circuses chose to book a California city within a few days of each other that the barns and billboards of the surrounding countryside were plastered with a covering of circus pictures 28 sheets deep. The opposition brigade of circus number one went out each morning to cover the advertisements of the rival show. The brigade of circus number two went out every evening to recover with its own billing. They watched each other so closely, these tireless advance men, that each knew when the other's crew left town to cover paper in the country.

At last one of them played a master stroke. Two nights before the first show was due to arrive, the brigade hired a hearse, climbed inside with posters, paste, and brushes, and quietly left town to do their work without attracting the attention of their competitors.

The advance advertising cars of the big shows carry large crews of ambitious workers who often average a posting of 10,000 to 12,000 sheets of circus lithographs a day. A crew of 30 men can bill a large city in a single day, so well do they understand their work.

White Elephant Competition.
Sometimes the tented enterprises tried to duplicate their rival's ace attractions. Barnum once imported a sacred white elephant from Siam. It wasn't pure white, but rather a cream color, and it cost a lot of money and trouble. Adam Forepaugh, then Barnum's leading competitor, copied the Siamese albino by applying a generous coating of white paint to unclotted parts of a gray pachyderm. His elephant was so much whiter than Barnum's that the public decided Forepaugh had the real article—until one day during a street parade in Philadelphia, when a cloudburst exposed the imposture.

Even then skeptical show-goers refused to believe that Barnum's white elephant was any more genuine than the one they had seen exposed. Somebody asked Barnum what he was billing as his chief attraction that season. He smiled and replied, "I've got a white elephant." Then and there he supplied a distinctly American angle to the age-old white-elephant allusion that to this day is used to describe something expensive which cannot be disposed of to any advantage.

The big shows fought each other until the summer of 1929, when a great consolidation was effected. Now six of the largest tent shows, all Ringling-owned, contend for patronage in friendly rivalry and try to keep out of one another's way.

Most outsiders think that every circus picks its complete route at the beginning of each season. In reality, they are routed only about six weeks in advance. Agents must study crop and factory conditions, epidemics of disease, and proximity of rival attractions, and must arrange to send the circus where there is a probability of doing good business.

Barometer of Prosperity.
Business men in progressive cities usually are glad to see a circus billed for a visit to their community. It is a barometer of prosperity, this nomadic canvas city with its tremendous overhead, because it cannot afford to visit cities which are in the throes of financial depression.

The history of the circus is the history of a battle to beat the Emersonian doctrine of compensation, the theory that, in the long run, good and bad fortune stack up about evenly. Because the enterprise is a game of sudden disaster and decided ups and downs, circuses sometimes have proved excellent places to put money—and wave it good-by. A few large fortunes have been amassed by circus owners; dozens have been lost through incompetent management, competition, and conditions outside the control of the owners.

It is commonly thought that hot, sunny weather is the answer to a circus manager's prayer, but such is not always the case. Either extreme means bad business in most instances. When a circus visited Peoria in 1930, the mercury simmered at 103 degrees and business was light. By contrast, another circus unloaded in Chicago during a snowstorm in the spring of the same year for its indoor engagement at the Coliseum. People decided that it just was not circus weather and stayed away. On the other hand, a circus exhibited in Brooklyn during a cold spell in May, 1931, and the crowds came despite the weather.

Golden Phantoms

FASCINATING TALES OF LOST MINES
©W.N.U. By Editha L. Watson

THE MOUNTAIN OF GOLD

PERHAPS a mountain of gold appears like one of those marvels which could never exist outside of fairy stories, but two men actually found such a place.

The Fisk expedition to the West came from Minnesota in the early '60's. Leading the wagon train were Captain J. L. Fisk and Dr. W. D. Dibb. Near Fort Rice, on a branch of the Yellowstone river, the train made camp. They were approaching dangerous country, and it was felt that a reconnoitre would be wise. So, while the wagons waited, Captain Fisk and Doctor Dibb rode out alone to see what lay ahead.

They went to the southwest. After some time on the way, they came to a deep and gloomy canyon, and in the rocks around them could be seen traces of gold. This was interesting, so they kept on. The farther they rode, the more gold appeared. At last the horses became tired, and since a small cave was near at hand they put the animals in this shelter to rest, out of sight of Indians who might be about.

After they had walked two miles, they saw so much gold in the rocks that they could hardly believe their eyes. To get a better idea of this golden country they climbed some 500 feet up a mountain side, and here the sunlight caught the gold until the whole place seemed bathed in an auriferous light. The pure metal could be pulled out of the rocks with their fingers!

Realizing that this was the ideal end for any journey, no matter where it might be headed, they staked claims—claims for themselves, claims for relatives and friends, and claims for every man in the wagon train—as fast as they could. Dark came while they were still staking off the glorious golden mountainside. Why go back now, only to return at daybreak? They decided to stay where they were, and to enjoy the unique experience of sleeping—if they could sleep—on almost solid gold.

But during the night an experience of another kind caused them to change their minds. Indians had seen them—Indians who perhaps felt a prior claim to the mountain of gold, and who did not propose to have that claim jumped.

Fortunately for the white men, there were not many in the attacking party, but they realized that they must retreat immediately. Sliding and stumbling, unable to see their footing, never knowing when death would reach them, the two men managed to reach the cave where the horses were.

It was too dangerous for them to remain in the canyon, for daylight would come shortly. Somehow they made their way out of the place, running and fighting, desperately aware that their lives hung on very slender threads indeed. But by some marvelous providence, they escaped and rode to the wagon encampment—only to find it, too, besieged, and by a larger band of Indians!

One can imagine Captain Fisk's depression. He had left the party for which he was responsible, and here he was, returning, perhaps, too late. He and Dr. Dibb entered the fight, and managed to rejoin the party, but most of the gold with which they had filled their pockets was lost.

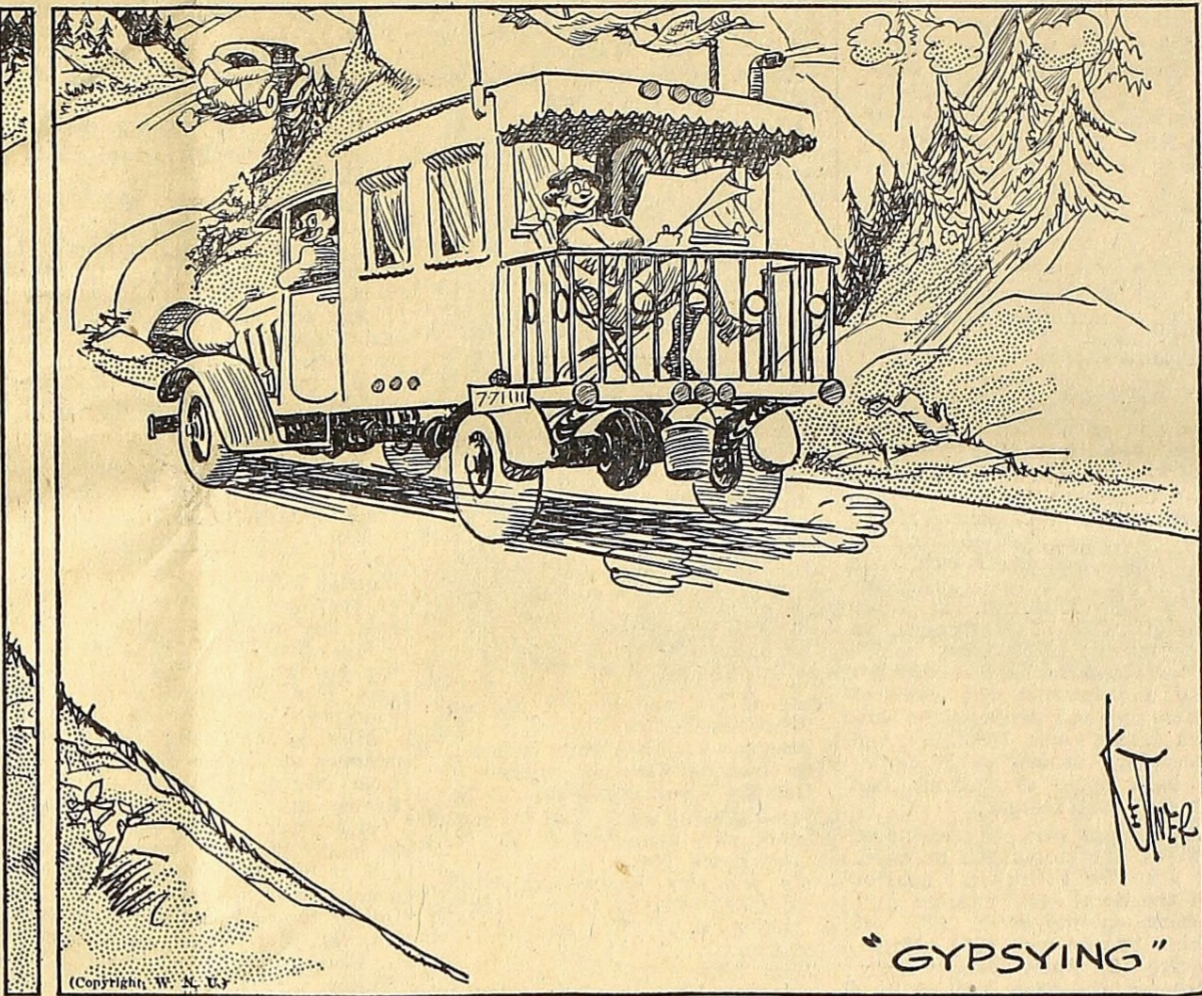
For two weeks the unfortunate wagon train stood off the Indians. Each day the white men grew more apprehensive and their attackers bolder. At last one man, feeling that he would soon die outside as inside the camp, fled for help, and got to Fort Rice in safety. Soldiers immediately rode to the rescue, and the bedraggled "expedition" returned to Fort Rice with them.

And now came the greatest disappointment of all. Orders had been given that the train should proceed no farther. The Indians were rising, and to venture deeper into their territory would be foolhardy. Captain Fisk had all a soldier's respect for orders, and he knew that he must obey. But before they started back for "the states," he tried to find out something about the mountain of gold. There was little to tell. Other men had ventured part of the way into those gloomy mountains, but some had been killed, and all efforts to see what lay in the canyons had been abandoned.

Perhaps it was this same wonderful mountain that Father Jean Pierre De Smet saw. Just where this was, the good old man would never say, for he feared that white miners filled with the peculiar madness engendered by the chase of the golden phantom would drive off or kill the Indians of the region—and Father De Smet loved humanity more than gold. However, we need not doubt that he saw it, for the priest himself told it in St. Louis. "I know," he said, "where gold exists in the Rocky mountains in such abundance that, if made known, it would astonish the world." But he would tell no more, except that he himself had seen the location, had told his Indian guides of its value and that if white men heard of it they would pour into the country and deface it. While Father De Smet often described the beauties of the land he loved so well, he never revealed anything that might yield a clue to gold.

OUR COMIC SECTION

Along the Concrete



(Copyright, W. N. U.)

THE FEATHERHEADS

By Osborne
© Western Newspaper Union



Dog Daze



FINNEY OF THE FORCE

By Ted O'Loughlin
© By Western Newspaper Union

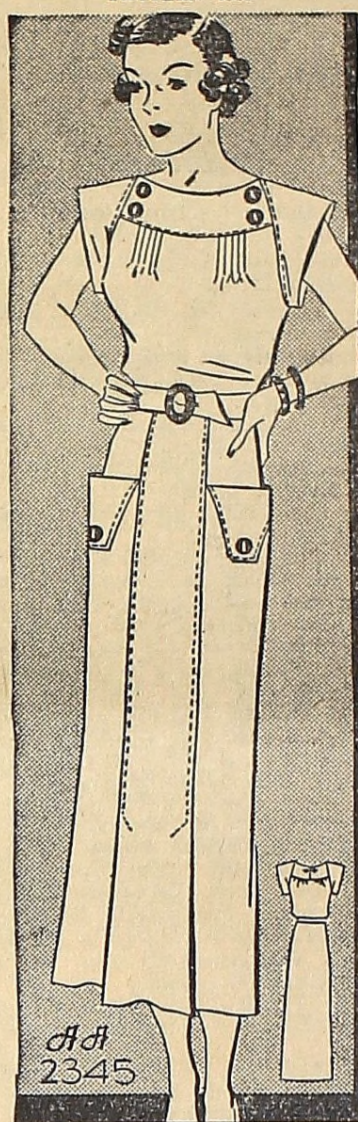


Under Suspicion



Several Such Dresses Solve Sports Problem

PATTERN 2345



Having everything "under control" is the best way to put in a poised, charming appearance on every occasion. That calls for a wardrobe extensive enough to fill the increased demands for which we nominate this dandy "Handy Sport" pattern. The clean-cut neckline is achieved with unique sleeve sections running right across a trimly tailored neck band. Darts over the bust lend a flattering note of softness and the pockets are a welcome change from the usual square. Shantung, sports silk, linen, pique would all be good whether you make it as is, or with contrasting yoke, sleeves, belt and pocket.

Pattern 2345 is available in sizes 14, 16, 18, 20, 32, 34, 36, 38, 40 and 42. Size 16 takes 3 3/4 yards 36 inch fabric. Illustrated step-by-step sewing instructions included.

SEND FIFTEEN CENTS (15c) in coins or stamps (coins preferred) for this pattern. Write plainly name, address, and style number. BE SURE TO STATE SIZE.

Address all orders to the Sewing Circle Pattern Department, 243 West Seventeenth Street, New York City.

Smiles

REVENGE

"I don't care," said the little girl who had not been invited to the party. "I'll be even with them."

"What will you do?" asked her mother.

"When I grow up I'll give a great big party and I won't invite anyone."

Didn't Work

"But why don't you yawn when he stays so long? He'll take the hint and go."

"I did yawn—but all he did was to tell me what beautiful teeth I had."

—Stray Stories Magazine.

With a Speedy Recovery

Hewitt—You don't seem to think much of him.

Jewett—If he had his conscience taken out it would be a minor operation.—Arcanum Bulletin.

Buried

First Girl—Where were you on your vacation?

Second Girl (Istlessly)—No man's land.

WNU—O 36—35



