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1 The 24th President

In April of 1945 when the world had seen five and one half years of devastating war and the United States had been at war for over three years, we were shocked and even somewhat overwhelmed to learn of the sudden demise of our chief executive, Franklin Delano Roosevelt. While all seemed to be going very well for the Allies, and the end of the war appeared to be in sight in the not too distant future, the loss of one of the prime war leaders at such a time was a blow of staggering proportions.

As some of the older members of the club may recall, television had not at that time come into its own, and radio was the big thing. Following Roosevelt's death all regular radio programs were cancelled for three days, and, aside vrom reporting the regular war news, all programs dealt with the life, character, and influence of the chief executive and with the new administration that had so suddenly and with so little warning and preparation been called into being.

During this period I happened to be listening to my radio when the announcer was discussing the new president, Harry S. Truman. He said, "There has been some question as to which president Harry S. Truman is. Let us clarify this question once and for all time - - Let there be no doubt about it -- Harry S. Truman is the 32nd and not the 33rd president of the United States." To this statement I uttered a hearty "Amen!" It looked as though one of my pet peeves had finally been satisfactorily resolved.

But alas! It would seem that this particular announcer (I have long since forgotten who he was) was completely without influence, or maybe he just flunked

arithmetic. While he spoke with such authority, his words seem to have fallen upon deaf ears. Today we all know that Truman was the 33rd, president, Eisenhower the 34th., Kennedy the 35th., and that Lyndon Baines Johnson had never been referred to as anything other than the 36th president of the United States.

And yet, how can Lyndon Baines Johnson be the 36th president when only thirty-five men have assumed that office during the constitutional history of the United States. I challenge any one here present or not present to give me the names of thirty-six different men who have held this high office. I have never been able to find more than thirty-five, and yet Johnson has never been referred to as anything other than the 36th. president. How come?

The answer, of course, is obvious. It goes back to Grover Cleveland, who, because of a frightful political blunder or an act of supreme statesmanship, have it either way you will, was unable to obtain reelection in the presidential election of 1888. We would not find ourselves in the mess that we have today if he had been more astute, or, better yet, if the Electoral College had been abolished, since in that election Cleveland actually had a majority of the popular vote but, alas, not of the electoral vote. As it turned out, Cleveland lost to Benjamin Harrison in 1888, but had recovered sufficiently by 1892 to be able to win that election. While Grover Cleveland was twice elected president, his two administrations, unlike those of all others with similar good fortune, were not continuous. His two administrations surrounded, engulfed, and almost smothered that of the more unlucky Benjamin Harrison.

This unfortunate development has posed an unresolvable dilemma for the chart makers. How can one compile a chronological table -- and what good is such a table if it is not chronological -- giving the pertinent data for each president and his administration without inserting the name of Grover Cleveland twice? There just is no way to get around this dilemma if the table is to set forth the data clearly. On the other hand, to include Cleveland's name twice seems to give him greater importance and more prestige than the rest,

a situation that is hardly warranted. The sometimes revered and oft hated Franklin Delano Roosevelt was elected president not twice but four times, just twice as many times as Cleveland, and yet he must content himself with having his name appear but once in such a chronological chart.

The chart makers have compounded their felony of listing Cleveland's name twice by giving him an additional number in the presidential rank as well. He is often referred to as the 22nd and the 24th president of the United States. But how can Cleveland be the twenty-fourth president if William McKinley was, in fact, the twenty-fourth man to fill that office? And if William McKinley was the 24th. president, by a simple process of counting Lyndon Johnson becomes the 35th.. Who properly was the 24th. president; that is the question!

This is "the voice of one crying in the wilderness" for a return to sanity. If William McKinley was the twenty-fourth person to assume the office of president, he should be considered as the 24th. president, and similarly, if Lyndon Baines Johnson is the thirty-fifth person to have this honor, he should be considered as the 35th. president and not the 36th. I appeal to your logic and to your comprehension of mathematics. But I fear that my humble plea is much too little and very much too late.

The presidential chart makers have been able to carry their case to the encyclopaedists and seem to have quite overpowered them. I have examined the most recent issues of Encyclopaedia Britannica, Encyclopaedia Americana, Colliers Encyclopaedia, American Peoples Encyclopaedia, Chambers Encyclopaedia, Merit Students Encyclopaedia, World Book Encyclopaedia, Grolier Universal Encyclopaedia, and Encyclopaedia International. With just one slight exception, they all state that William Howard Taft was the 27th. president, Calvin Coolidge the 30th. president, and John Fitzgerald Kennedy the 35th.. The one slight exception is the Encyclopaedia International, which seems to be somewhat confused, since it states that both Taft and Wilson were the 27th. president, that Coolidge was the 29th. instead of the 30th., and that Roosevelt and Truman were both the 32nd.. Small support for my cause, to be sure, but at least

I am not overruled unanimously.

How do all these encyclopaedias treat the real culprit in this controversy, Grover Cleveland himself? Is he called the 22nd. president, the 24th. president or both? The Encyclopaedia Britannica and the World Book Encyclopaedia duck the issue neatly by giving Cleveland no number and merely state that he served as president of the United States on two different occasions. All of the other encyclopaedias mentioned above unequivocally state that Cleveland was the 22nd. and the 24th. president. The implications of this statement are enormous.

There is some evidence that there might not always have been such almost complete unanimity upon this question among the encyclopaedists. While the position of Brittanica has always been consistent, its 1911 edition declaring William Howard Taft to be the 27th. president, the position of Encyclopaedia Americana has been more vacillating. Its 1946 edition states that both Harding and Coolidge were the 29th. president and that Truman was the 32nd. . The only encyclopaedia that I have found that consistently treats this issue in the manner that I feel it should be treated is that Columbia Encyclopaedia that may be found, of all places, in the library of the Literary Club. This very excellent encyclopaedia in one volume with publication date of 1950 clearly states that Benjamin Harrison was the 23rd. president, William McKinley the 24th., Theodore Roosevelt the 25th., William Howard Taft the 26th., Woodrow Wilson the 27th., Warren G. Harding the 28th., Calvin Coolidge the 29th., Herbert Hoover the 30th., Franklin Delano Roosevelt the 31st., and Harry S. Truman the 32nd.. Glory be!

Is there any precedent that supports my position? I find one small, though not entirely relevant, one. When the Holy Roman Emperor, Henry IV, was temporarily deposed as the result of one of his many arguments with the redoubtable Hildebrand, he did not upon his restoration assume the crown as Henry V. Similarly, when, after the king-making Earl of Warwick had deposed the Lancastrian monarch to the throne that he had held before, this monarch did not resume the throne as Henry VII, nor upon his subsequent demise did the Yorkist Edward resume the throne as Edward V. This rank among

the English Edwards was to be reserved for his more unfortunate son.

The other day I thought I had perhaps stumbled upon a more satisfactory precedent when I received from the Ohio Historical Society a communication concerning the publication of a new book on the life of Joseph B. Foraker, who was referred to as the 37th. governor of Ohio. Here was authority indeed, and so I hastily obtained a list of the governors of the state only to find to my chagrin that Foraker was the thirty-fourth man to assume the governorship since Ohio had been a state. Then, how come the 37th.? Well, it seems that Allen Trimble, Wilson Shannon, and Rutherford B. Hayes, all coming before Foraker, had divided ~~terms~~ terms of office, so that Trimble was both the 8th. and 10th. governor, Shannon the 14th. and 16th., and Hayes the 29th. and 31st., which would then make Foraker the 37th.. Therefore, although Governor Rhodes is only the fifty-sixth man to assume the office, it appears that he may none-the-less be the 61st. governor of Ohio. The Ohio Historical Society has let me down. I dare not pursue my research further.

I am glad to report, however, that the Cincinnati Park Board is on my side. If it followed the reasoning of the chartmakers, the encyclopaedists, and the Ohio Historical Society, there would be two trees dedicated to President Cleveland in the Presidents' Grove in Eden Park. There is but one! Let us rejoice that our Park Board is so intelligent.

Roger W. Clark

2

The Bug Men

A few weeks ago, accompanied by two young grandchildren making their first such visit, I enjoyed a leisurely tour through the mechanical departments of The Cincinnati Enquirer at a time when the first edition was rolling to press. It was almost 40 years since my last active employment around a big-city newspaper plant had ended.

The purpose, of course, was to give the

youngsters a glimpse of the processes which must be combined, on a finely-timed schedule, to turn out the marvel of the modern metropolitan newspaper. An unexpected result, however, was to remind me of how far mechanical progress had outrun my comprehension of what I was seeing again after so long a time.

Reporters still wrote their stories at typewriters. Editors still corrected copy and wrote headlines by hand. Except for new machines to set headline and display type up to the largest type sizes, the processes of linotyping, composition and stereotyping were still reassuringly familiar. Though the press units were more compact and operated at much higher speeds, they still were recognizable as Goss presses.

The changes which were most shocking, at least to me as a person whose newspaper experience had been largely with The Associated Press, were in the area of transmission of wire news and photos.

The equipment for wire transmission of news and feature photos was in its erratic and troublesome infancy during my last year or two with The AP. Thus it was a real jolt to try to grasp what I was seeing in a small glass-enclosed machine. The guide told me that it was turning out in seven minutes a remarkably clear print, three columns wide and perhaps six inches deep, of a photograph, sent from Moscow via Telstar relay, of a Red Square parade which had occurred that day.

The receiving room for all of the press association and feature service wires was a small sound-proofed room in which 15 or 20 high-speed printer machines were lined up side by side. They were piling wire copy into The Enquirer at a rate approaching 1,000,000 words a night, roughly 10 times the quantity received by the largest city daily 40 years ago. The room was unattended except for an occasional visit by a copy boy who would snip off a few yards of typewritten copy to be delivered to the various editors.

That tiny set-up had superseded the bedlam of staccato clicking of Morse senders and receivers, manned by dozens of telegraphers, which had been the big press association wire room of my day. The tele-

graphers not only had departed but, it seemed to me, had taken with them something precious, something almost unique. The traditional relationship between an AP editor and his telegraph operator was gone for all time.

In the AP service, a wire editor, and to almost the same degree a reporter, was only one man of a two-man team. The other was a telegraph operator. If they were congenial, there grew up between them a relationship unlike any other that I ever have encountered. They worked within a few feet of each other for hours on end, took their lunch breaks and rest breaks together, and often were in each other's company away from work. The bond between them, however, was not just one of propinquity, but one of mutual respect and affection, mutual dependence and frequent mutual assistance, much like the tie between the deep-sea diver and the man tending his air hose. To each, the other became "my operator" or "my editor". The editor might know what he wanted to say to a string of distant newspapers linked by a telegraph circuit. But the operator had to say it for him. And other operators at the receiving points had to interpret clicks on a wire into words intelligible to their editors.

In the early 1920's, the first high-speed printer on a major wire circuit was still several years in the future, although fitful and discouraging experiments with primitive and cumbersome equipment were being made on the North Wire between Chicago and the Pacific Northwest and way points. All sending and receiving of news was by Morse wires manned by telegraphers, of whom there were two distinct breeds. One group whose sending was by the standard Morse telegraph key, and who knew some smattering of the Phillips Code, were the peasants of the craft. They could handle perhaps 20 or 30 words a minute. They were known simply as "operators". The other group, whose sending was by a sophisticated transmitter known as a "bug", and who knew all of the 6,000 symbols of Phillips Code by heart, were the aristocrats united in a superior caste of their own. They could average 60 to 75 words a minute and, given a fast typist as a receiver, could do spurts reaching or even exceeding 100 words. They were universally called "bug men".

For secondary circuits or relief work, the AP had to use a few operators, but its front-rank telegraphers -- the men on the major circuits with top jobs and top pay, who got the extra-pay field assignments and who were the elite from among whom the AP selected its highly-responsible wire chiefs -- were all "bug men".

American lore has caught vividly the romantic fascination of newspaper work. A dozen first-rate dramas have brought to life the hard-driving, cynical city editor relentlessly driving his staff of reporters to dig out the facts for the spectacular "scoop" which would expose the corrupt City Hall gang and hold it up to public scorn. From the earliest war-reporting exploits of James Gordon Bennett down through the years to the legendary Ernie Pyle of World War II and the Jim Lucas of our own day, popular literature has caught the flavor of the intrepid and resourceful reporter who, working alone against fearful odds, has scored his "beat" and got it back to the office barely in time to re-plate the front page of the last edition. And daily journalism has produced its own lasting contributions to literature in such epic pieces as Winston Churchill's reporting of the Boer War, in the anonymous AP reporter's national story of the San Francisco earthquake starting with the cryptic line, "And San Francisco was." and in Kirk Simpson's moving and deathless AP story on the burial of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington Cemetery.

Yet the fame of the telegrapher and the wire chief and the "bug men" of modern journalism has remained largely unchronicled, rich though it is in incidents with their own touches of intrepidity and resourcefulness. In thinking back over my years of intimate association with the fabled "bug men", two of their exploits remain unforgettable.

One occurred in the darkness and gloom of a wild, stormy night in the early fall of September, 1925. At the time, the imagination of the American people had been stirred by the potentialities of lighter-than air dirigibles, starting with the Zeppelins of World War I, progressing through the mishaps of a series of craft dependent upon hydrogen for lifting power which were destroyed by fire or explosion, and culminating in the exploits of the U. S. Navy's giant dirigible, the

Shenandoah. So great was the interest in these great ships that it had become standard routine for the AP to set up a costly and elaborate monitoring watch along the projected route of any cruise. Small-town newspaper men and railroad-station telegraphers were enlisted, as the Shenandoah passed over a scheduled point, to send a signal -- known by its code symbol as an "O-S" - to confirm that the ship was safely on its way.

On that September day, the Shenandoah had started in early afternoon from the Lakehurst Naval Air Station on a westward cruise to a mid-western destination, the Twin Cities as I now recall. Through the afternoon and early evening, the monitoring system worked perfectly. Every few minutes, some AP office on the East Wire circuit would break in with a flash noting the time at which the silver ship had been last sighted and the direction of her course. The flashes droned in steadily from Altoona in the Pennsylvania mountains, from a series of Pittsburgh suburban communities, and finally at a little after 9 o'clock, from Youngstown, Ohio, which carried the additional information that a heavy electrical storm was in progress to the west. Then silence. The next scheduled check point was Fort Wayne, Indiana, but some intermediate information was expected from small towns and railroad stations across northern Ohio. But none came. Anxiety mounted in the AP control center in Chicago until worst fears were confirmed, around 10 o'clock, that an explosion had been seen and a great crash heard by a farmer ten or 15 miles east of Lima.

There was no big-city newspaper nearby. The AP had only a one-man office at Toledo. Then came a call from the Chicago Tribune. It wanted the AP to join in chartering a plane at the Lake Front airport and sending a team of reporters and photographers to Lima, and proceed from there to the crash by automobile. Three veteran reporters and a photographer grabbed their equipment and were ready to leave the office within two or three minutes. The Night Editor stopped them, saying, "But how are you going to get the story out? Where will you find a wire operating after midnight? We had better play it safe and send the Night Wire Chief." That was done. Paul Lakin, an old-time "bug man" with a reputation for keeping his head in tight spots, packed his bug in its leather case and was almost

through the door when, responding to an after-thought, he darted back and got a Western Union wire map of Ohio and jammed it in his pocket.

This is not the story of the Shenandoah, of how she was wrenched into two pieces in a severe electrical line squall, the heavy one with the engine nacelle crashing and exploding, and the forward one being maneuvered by Commander Rosendahl as a free balloon and landed safely in a dense wooded area ten miles away, but is the story of the resourcefulness of Paul Lakin.

When the news party arrived at the scene and had fanned out until it found the forward section of the ship and its survivors, it had the story of the year and some epic photographs but no communications. They could not even locate a telephone, much less a telegraph station. But Lakin had been busy while they were tracking down the news. He had found a farmer familiar with the countryside who led him to a particular crossroad Paul had located on a map with a flashlight. There he found a small stone marker noted on the map, which located a Western Union cable underground at its base. It was unearthed and cut. Selecting a red insulated wire which the map marked as a Detroit-Fort Wayne circuit, Lakin spliced in his bug, identified himself, and had the Fort Wayne wire chief connect a circuit directly to the AP wire room in Chicago. With a tarpaulin stretched from the roof of a farm building to a nearby fence line to keep off the rain, and with the only light from lanterns and flashlights, Lakin was in business. Balancing his bug on a fallen log, he kept at it for the next two hours, dividing his time in ten-minute intervals between the AP and the Tribune. That was how Commander Rosendahl's epic story of the incredible luck of the survivors reached the world.

Somewhat less theatrical but quite as ingenious was the exploit of another "bug man", Arthur Buck of Indianapolis, in getting out of the disaster region the story of the West Frankfort-Murphysboro tornado, which killed several hundred people and wiped out a string of villages in a fifty-mile swath through a sparsely-populated region of southern Illinois. It had happened in late afternoon. It was promptly reported

by newspaper and press association teams from St. Louis, Louisville and Indianapolis. But telephone and telegraph facilities had been wiped out. Buck located a way station of the Illinois Central Railroad on the edge of the area. A distraught station manager, was trying to wait on the counter where hundreds of frantic people were trying to file telegrams notifying distant relatives of deaths or miraculous escapes, and send some of the telegrams at the same time. Buck's attempt to pre-empt the wire for press use ran head-on into a Western Union rule giving precedence to death messages over all other wire traffic.

But that did not stop Buck. He quickly saw that the local man was little better than an amateur, that between his labored sending of 10 words a minute and the distractions of the public at his counter, he was getting off about one message in every four minutes. Buck offered to help him and got out his bug, splicing it into the circuit. He reached the Western Union wire chief in Louisville and quickly made a deal with him. If he would route the circuit into the AP office where a top bug and code man could do the receiving and transcribing, Buck would double the number of messages cleared per hour if the AP could have the remainder of each hour for news transmission. It worked perfectly. The two bug men would handle thirty death messages in 15 or 18 minutes, and then have from 42 to 45 minutes for news. Only the AP got its complete story out that night, the other media being limited to a few bulletins by telephone or Western Union messages from still more distant sending points.

Yes, the "bug men" took something precious with him when he departed.

Morris Edwards

3

Quotations

I have never been accused of being lazy. I enjoy writing, which I have found somewhat difficult. I am an avid reader and thoroughly enjoy study of the history of civilization, and also essays on contemporary opinions of politics, economics, and the arts. Therefore

in assigning this short paper to quotations, may I ask this august body of intellectuals to forgive the absence of originality.

I recently listened to President Johnson's State of the Union address to the Congress, but finally, with feelings of frustration, I used the wonderful prerogative of turning the dial. War - rioting - poverty - education - housing - civil rights - taxes - social security - Great Society - inflation - blance of payment - narcotics - hippies - population explosion - The Pill - clergy celibacy - and last but not least - Le Grand Charles. What more could be found to form a delusion of our vaunted greatness? Where is the Golden Rule? Where is human dignity? Where is Utopia?

Frederick the Great in the eighteenth century made the following analogous statement:

"Superstition, self interest, vengeance, treason, ingratitude will produce bloody and tragic scenes until the end of time, because we are governed by passions and very rarely by reason. There will always be wars, lawsuits, devastations, plagues, earthquakes, and bankruptcies. Since this is so, I presume it must be necessary. But it seems to me that if this universe had been made by a benevolent being, he should have made us happier than we are. The human mind is weak; more than three-fourths of mankind are made for subjection to the most absurd fanaticisms. Fear of the devil and hell fascinates their eyes, and they detest the wise man who tries to enlighten them. In vain do I seek in them that image of God which the theologians assert they bear upon them. Every man has wild beast in him; few can restrain it; most men let the bridle when not restrained by terror of the law".

The reading of The Praise of Folly by Erasmus is amusing, instructive, and a lively and valuable commentary on our own times. It also supplies an analogy to the forgoing. For folly presents an interesting attitude toward existing world turmoil and provides a

safety valve for those who become tense and worried - lacking a sense of humor.

A few days ago I had occasion to visit a friend on the tenth floor of an office building at Seventh and Vine Streets. The view of the city from his window revealed the frightful ugliness of American cities, and the only artistic relief was the tower of Peter in Chains Cathedral built 125 years ago. Who can admire the Kroger building, and who can stroll west on Fourth Street without making comparison between the new Provident Tower and Central Trust Tower? I frequently drive down Erie Avenue into Madison Road, and sadly view the ugly monster called Regency, which completely ruined the beauty of Withrow High School, long a landmark of esthetic beauty.

Philip Johnson, an eastern architect of talent, writes as follows:

"Modern architecture is a flop in the sense that we of the twentieth century are a flop as a culture. The times - not only the art of building - are out of joint. And it is certainly in our cities where the total failure is most obvious. There is no question that they are uglier now than they were fifty years ago. In other words, what we architects are doing now is uglier than what our ancestors did. 'Down hill all the way' as British writer Leonard Woolf laments the last fifty years in the intellectuals' world. Ditto for our visual surroundings. What happened? (1) Our values have changed. (2) Our problems have changed. What seems "good" to us today is not the beauty of our community but the beauty of our individual possessions. Status symbols we understand. Sacrifice for communal beauty seems slightly Communistic.

The industrial revolution brought with it the idea that cities and city government exist only to carry garbage and build roads, not to control our surroundings esthetically."

So much for architecture, despite the urge to detail and enlarge.

I recently joined my good friend Carl Zimmerman in viewing at our art museum an exhibit of paintings by artists from the Tri-State area. There were a goodly number of submissions, which filled about six large galleries. After leaving, I requested my companion to write a brief account of his reactions, which follows:

"It is my belief that we are caught in the snare of abstraction or minimal art, or anti-art. We have moved so far away from subject matter in any realistic sense that we are powerless to act or admit to anything of human concern, or the wonder of nature. The man who said that 'less is more' is also saying that nothing is the most.

But band wagons are still enthralling. I am afraid that the influence of social security is more at work in the intellectual field than we like to admit. Nobody wants the responsibility of being alone. Someone asked the abstract artist Joseph Albers what advise he would give to young artists. He said, 'Stay off the band wagon'. When one sees the same thing repeated time and time again, one begins to long for a little bit of difference. And after all, it requires such a little bit to make a difference. I think history proves we cannot digest too much too quickly. In any event man is not smart enough to be completely at odds with himself".

In my youth, blacksmith shops were still in existence, and the ability to forge iron into various shapes was an appealing craft. Modern sculptors have reverted to forging as an instrument for solving avant garde notions of esthetics. A recent article in Time is worth quoting:

"That odd bit of sculpture in the corner - does it look sort of like a mashed

motorcycle? Could be if it's the work of Washington's newest artistic giant, Karl Hess, 44. Only three years ago, Hess was expressing himself in a different medium as Barry Goldwater's speechwriter. After the campaign, though, he fell into such a malodor that he could not land a job even as a Capitol Hill elevator operator. He took up motorcycle racing as a diversion, then began studying welding so that he could repair his own bikes. Sculpture being what it is these days, it was just a few twists from the machine shop to an eye-riveting exhibition of welded sculpture at Georgetown's Volta Place Gallery, where Hess sold a dozen pieces opening week at prices ranging from \$75 to \$1500. 'It's really bailing me out,' said the artist. 'I seem to be pretty unemployable.'

Several years ago, Glenn Gould, the famous piano virtuoso, gave a lecture entitled "Arnold Schoenberg - A Perspective." It was an interesting and beautifully worded biography of the famous German composer. But the following quotations point out a paradox which applies to many contemporary attempts by musicologists to make the composing of music a science rather than a great art form.

"Of course the early propagandists for atonality pointed with a good deal of pride to the fact that the movement toward abstract art began at almost exactly the same time as atonality, and there are certain comfortable parallels between the careers of the painter Kandinsky and the composer Schoenberg.

"But I think it is dangerous to pursue the parallel too closely for the simple reason that music is always abstract, that it has no allegorical connotations except in the highest metaphysical sense, and it does not and has not, with very few exceptions, pretended to be other than a means of expressing the mysteries of communication in a form which is equally

mysterious."

And now for rebuttal:

"A celebrated composer remarked that he believed that Schoenberg's musical expression was a very powerful but a very tortured one, and that certain of the works would undoubtedly survive as artistic reminders of the turmoil and instability of our age."

Needless to say, one rarely hears a Schoenberg work performed by a symphony orchestra.

In closing may I state that despite the pessimistic tone of this paper, the writer enjoys the present attempts to cultural achievement, and hopes for some improvement in the future.

Edward J. Schulte
