

# GIMME A MATCH

By FRED M. KIEFER

Obadiah Gore found that he could create a forced draft-heat in his forge in a very satisfactory manner by pumping his bellows over that hard, black substance he came eventually to know as anthracite coal. Obadiah, we may correctly assume, found no great difficulty in supplying his small forge with the mineral. All he had to do, when it became necessary to replenish his needs, was to swing his bag, or basket, over his arm and hie to the nearest of the numerous spots where the coal was visible to the eye on the surface of the hill. A little digging, or picking, and the blacksmith was ready again to attend to his horseshoeing or gun-barrel straightening or even to hammering out a skillet for wife Gore.

Obadiah Gore was fortunate in his choice of settlement, at least where it concerned his business, for he had erected his shop in the Wyoming Valley, which, as time went on and a great industry developed, became the center and the greatest in deposits and area of the three large Pennsylvania hard coal districts. A modern chamber of commerce now refers to the city that has grown over and around the spot where Obadiah's bellows once blew as, "The Heart of the Valley That Warms The Nation," which, in my opinion, is a pretty piece of speech, to say the least.

Approximately 40 years after the smithy had first shaped his metal by the new method of heating, a se-date and enlightened gentleman wrote on the fly-leaf of one of his law books, "Feb. 11, 1808 made the experiment of burning the common stone coal of the valley in a grate, in a common fireplace in my house, and found it will answer the purpose of fuel, making a clearer and better fire, at less expense, than burning wood in the common way." Jesse Fell.

Judge Fell could not have confined his discovery to the fly-leaf alone for news of his action spread throughout the valley and soon the judge probably wished he had not fooled around with the "common stone coal" at all since his home became overrun with curious neighbors. But on the other hand, the judge was mightily pleased with himself. Not only that the success of his experiment had increased his already high standing in the community but that, since he kept a tavern, a pleasant increase in business resulted from the flocking natives.

Before, however, advancing upon the assumption that Judge Fell was one of the immortal "firsts" it is no more than fair to record that in the archives of the Wyoming Historical and Geological Society at Wilkes-Barre there rests a letter from Oliver Evans. Oliver Evans dated his letter, Philadelphia, Feb. 15, 1803 and we have no reason to believe that was not the day upon which it was written. One can't be picking flaws where the cloth is perfect. Well, anyway, Oliver wrote to Jacob Cist wherein he puts forth certain information which, in all probability, needs to him the right of claim to the burning of anthracite coal in an open grate on its initial trial.

In the same year that Evans was coming in under the wire before our judge, operators at Summit Hill in Carbon County were shipping anthracite down the Lehigh River to Philadelphia. The Susquehanna waited four years longer to become a conveyor of the important product, and in 1807 arks (as they were called) carrying 55 tons left Plymouth and arrived at Columbia. The Susquehanna, being navigable only at times of high water, never became a large factor in shipping coal. Today, this once beautiful river, is, between Pittston and Sunbury, a sewage system for mine pumpings and its waters blend between a dirty, slate grey color and a brownish-purple horror.

Obajah Smith (don't confuse with Obadiah Gore) and company of Plymouth, who had made the barge shipments to Columbia, were persistent men. Failing to sell a single hunk of coal to the skeptical Columbians, they left the black rocks in a pile where they had unloaded them and returned to Plymouth. Accompanying their next venture of two loaded arks was a grate and upon arrival once more at the down river destination they proceeded to set up the grate and give a practical demonstration of how fine their coal would burn.

It is pleasant to know that the good people of Columbia liked the little-known substance and purchased the whole of it, thus starting anthracite on its dubious—still dubious—journey.

## THE BOOK SHELF

"How To Be A Naval Officer." By Rear Admiral Yates Stirling, Jr. Robert McBride & Company, N. Y. \$1.75. 194 pages.

Our navy has grown with necessity always the mother of invention. When new weapons were discovered, new defenses were quickly evolved. The iron clad "Merrimac" was answered by the revolving turret of the "Monitor." The threat of the airplane and submarine will be answered by offsetting devices of the navy. And today, the demand for leadership in our rapidly expanding navy is answered by the special ensign training course.

## FOOTNOTES

By EMMONS BLAKE

I saw in The Post some weeks ago stories concerning records of county fair attendance. I can claim a record almost as good as Mrs. Yaple's or Mr. Welsh's.

The San Diego County Fair was organized about five years ago. Now, a perfect attendance record of five fairs isn't much and in fact I missed last year's fair as I was back East. But I have attended four out of the five, and last week was the first time I used the gate.

Bill and I have always made it a point to gain admission to the grounds by unconventional methods; both as a hobby and for financial reasons. We have found this to be true; no matter how much money a person takes to the fair he will come home broke. So, we are not averse to saving admission fees for more urgent uses.

The fair grounds are cleverly laid out. The three sides are well protected, one by water, another by a high fence topped with barbed wire; the third and most dangerous side is protected by a gate. We have employed devious ways of getting in. The first year we waded across the water barrier at low tide (the fair grounds are built at the Del Mar race track, practically on the beach). This was not such fun because the bottom was continually taking on all the better known qualities of quicksand. The next year we decided to do a better job of it. We found a ditch used to drain the race track, that was deep enough to hide in; being very careful to keep our backs right to where we could make a run for the crowds and safety. After we found ourselves in the grounds and undetected, even though our pants were ruined from crawling, we learned that that day was "School Day". Every school kid was admitted free.

In 1938 we found a worn spot in the fence and used it to advantage. Just as we got through and stood on the other side we noticed two guards coming toward us. We hastily turned toward the fence and yelled "get back there you kids, we see you," and hurled rocks at imaginary offenders. This ruse worked and the guards turned back satisfied that we were on their side—as we were.

Last Friday when we went I thought we had the best chance ever. A good friend of Bill's had lent him an exhibitor's sticker. We headed confidently for the gate. Bill started to drive through but the gateman stopped us with "Who's your friend there?" I thought we were sunk, but Bill turned haughtily and said, "Sir, since when can't a man bring in his own stebleman to care for his stock?" After we were in Bill laughed at my indignation. "Boy," he said, "it's a good thing your shirt was dirty."

Of course the best way to become a naval officer is still to graduate from Annapolis Naval Academy. But there are other ways to attain the much coveted commission in our sea forces. The special intensive training course is offered to young men with a minimum of two years of college and certain physical and mental qualifications. Other ways are to rise from the Naval Officers Reserves after having graduated from a college R. O. T. C. course, or after having graduated from Pensacola Air School. In addition, the author explains that a Coast Guard and Marine Corps commission, may also be obtained with certain special preparations.

Whether or not you want to become a naval officer, however, should have nothing to do with your interest in the vivid little volume. The most important quality of the book is that any timely question you might entertain about the navy is concisely and adequately answered.

This might seem like a rather cold blooded subject for any kind of warmth of style. Yet strangely the author achieves just that quality. His outline of the traditions of the navy touches off a quick spark of patriotism. His discussion of the efficiency of the United States Navy shows a glow of professional pride.

The Admiral treats of the Coast Guard and Marines in tribute as sincere and kind as taps at evening. The book is profusely illustrated with splendid photographs and contains two scholarly appendices on the most practical steps in becoming an officer in the United States Navy.

## MY! HOW HE'S GROWN!



## SECOND THOUGHTS

by javie aiche

Much as I dislike the place of my abode, I submit as fortunate one provision of the builders. Double doors open from the rear bedroom to the roof of the back porch. What if there is another door, a summer door? It is of copper mesh design, and for a ghost to get through requires only trifling disintegration. Friction involved in the process merely sets up magnetic forces that make re-assembly automatic.

A tree of what the naturalist would call unbragous growth rises off-side the garage. Its branches deliquesce comfortably athwart the porch roof, and the leaves are of the clinging variety, so that even this late in the year there is the approximation of spooky shadiness when the moon in the wane slants its rays toward our domicile.

Add a broad-paneled window just above the porch eaves and just beside the bed wherein your correspondent takes what an insomniac calls rest, and you have the picture. It was no trick at all to know the time was a minute past midnight. The illuminated face of the three-dollar watch was hanging from the pipe-holder on the handy smoking-stand, first to engage the sight when that seemed less sound than suggestion of it accentuated the silence of the night.

A sigh of sleeplessness paced the hand thrust out to pull aside the blind. Unmistakably on the glass was a misty impression, faintly luminous and wholly indicative of a cold palm having been thrust against the

pane. My old eyes can make many mistakes; so, your correspondent arose and threw open the French doors. And the presence came in. You couldn't call it anything else, because at first it could not be seen, only sensed.

I do not like the violence which incandescence inflicts when an electric bulb is switched to its current. A better contribution to manifestation of the supernatural is the infrared lamp, one of which occasionally comes to the rescue of your correspondent's neuritis and, therefore, is kept within call for immediate service. The rather astringent rays drew the presence into tangible form. And, may the saints preserve me in faith and honor, if there wasn't Eph McCoy. About him there was the froziness of mould, as thought too long he had immured in the vasty earthiness of his repose. "Hello, Eph," I said.

His lips moved but he uttered no sound. I noticed then that in his eyes was a look of utter despair. He pointed to his lips. They were still moving, soundlessly. "Poor Eph," I said, "now I understand."

I directed the red cylinder of the infra-red lamp flush in the face of the bedraggled ghost and summoned to my aid all I had ever heard of the art of lip-reading. And, over and over, Eph was trying to ask: "Where is he?" My editor, you too must understand.

There is a ghost to lay. Howell Rees is guilty of malfeasance, non-feasance and dereliction of duty. He brought Eph McCoy back to interest in mundane affairs and then went into non-support of his resurrection. Eph is no Zombie. You can't tell him to go hunting Howell Rees away down there in the West Indies. He'd get all tangled up with Voodoo and never again be the same old Eph.

This, then, is a petition to the absent Postscripter. He's got to take the spell off Eph and give him back to his generation. Without Rees he's voiceless and he ought to be a void. It's disgraceful to have the heroic pioneer in unaccustomed places, and playing the part of the dummy. His Buckskin Party has given us enough of that kind of performance.

Freedom The columnists and contributors on this page are allowed great latitude in expressing their own opinions, even when their opinions are at variance with those of The Post

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## SENTIMENTAL SIDE

By EDITH BLEZ

We had Thanksgiving in My Town in New Jersey last week. It certainly made an awful mixup with Pennsylvania celebrating this week. Most of our commuters go to Philadelphia to work, and it meant that we had two Thanksgiving days. The women celebrated one without their husbands, and the other without their children!

Officially the twenty-first was Thanksgiving Day so we had our traditional football game. If half the men were working, I don't know what would have happened if they had been home. There were so many people at the game that there wasn't room to breathe.

The game was scheduled for two o'clock and the crowd began gathering about twelve. There were long black streams of people coming in all directions. Two hours before the game began there wasn't a place to park within five squares of the field. The game was played in Hadsonfield which is about a mile from My Town. The two teams have been bitter rivals for generations. There was a time it was so bitter that the Thanksgiving game was cut out of the schedule because the game always ended in a fight. This year the rivalry was friendly; at least until the game was over.

The football team in My Town hasn't lost a game in two years and it was all set to defeat a team it never suspected was so good. Both teams were keyed to hysteria. When the bands and cheerleaders marched on the field the crowd went mad. There wasn't a vacant seat.

In My Town the members of the high school football team are little tin Gods. Most of the boys have been born in My Town and when they turn out to be good football players the residents look on them as something out of the ordinary.

## THE LOW DOWN FROM HICKORY GROVE

This Mr. Willkie don't need to feel too bad about the election. He came out second best, but any duck who will get around 21 million votes versus around 25 million for the other side, is not doing so bad.

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H. W. Risley, Editor and Publisher  
H. J. Price, Mech. Supt.

We have one family of four boys and the oldest has been a football star for four years and many a time during an exciting play I have heard Joe's brother shout: "Come on Joe—Ma says we can have two quarts of ice cream if you make another touchdown." Joe's mother never misses a game and I know she knows as much about football as any of her boys. At the end of the first half the score was a tie. It never occurred to anyone in My Town that the team could lose!

While there was time there was always hope! When things looked the worst the crowd on our side were all thinking the same thing: "Joe would get out of that huddle and make a another touchdown somehow. Joe would run the length of the field, Joe couldn't be stopped." But Joe didn't get out of the huddle and Joe didn't make another touchdown. When the last whistle blew My Town had lost the biggest game of the year!

The opposing team was hilarious but on our side you could have cut the gloom with a knife and when the team arrived back home those big husky football fellows burst into tears, and nobody told them to stop

# MUSINGS OF AN AVERAGE MAN

By The Bystander

We know through the medium of the press and radio that a devastating war is going on in Europe. We have been told that this war endangers us and that unless we arm ourselves quickly and enormously, our very lives and surely our liberty, are dangerously threatened.

We have been told by those in authority that a state of emergency exists, and that unless our man-power and manufacturing facilities are mobilized to their fullest extent, we will not be able to arm in time to avert this catastrophe that hangs over our heads. We have been led to believe that planes and more planes are our most vital and impelling need. We have believed this, we average people, and feel that no sacrifice is too great to make in this extreme emergency.

Our sons, and our neighbors sons, have registered for the selective draft. Many have already volunteered. Our factories are being mobilized and geared to work at their utmost capacity to fill our great need for armament. In the forefront of this need for armament stands our potential ally—the country whom the average man believes is standing almost alone between us and this frightful fate we have been told awaits us, not just around the corner, but actually in full view. This nation that we are pledged to aid in every way possible short of war has been clamoring for planes and more and more planes and we are bending every effort to supply this need—or are we?

In Downey, California, is located an airplane factory with contracts for 84-million dollars worth of military planes. This factory employs 5,200 men. These 5,200 men are on strike. All work on the planes that are so vital to our own armament program and are so sorely needed by England is stopped. The reason for the strike is that some workers in the lower wage brackets want more money. The company on its part claims that it cannot pay more and still make the profit it feels it is entitled to on its investment.

Now the average man is not interested in who may be right or who may be wrong in this controversy. As is always the case, in all probability much could be said on both sides. The thing the average man is interested in, is that this strike has been permitted to go on. It has been stated, and we believe generally accepted as a fact, that the deathblow to the liberty of France was delivered by striking workers and a weak government which permitted these strikes to cripple the French rearmament program.

We could digress here and ask what the laboring man of France gained, even though he won his strike; or on the other hand, ask the investing public of France what it gained, even though it won its point. We could even turn this into a sermon and ask, "What profit it a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul." But we won't do any of these things. What the average man wants to know is, what is our government going to do about this strike that has tied up one of the main gears of our vital armament machinery. We average people firmly believe that the principle involved in the few cents an hour increase demanded by the laborer or the firm's denial of ability to pay, is a very trivial matter when weighed against the common good of all of us.

We feel that this stoppage is sabotage if it does not boarder on treason. This strike may not have its inception in sabotage; it may not be fostered by saboteurs; but its result is the same as if it were.

5,200 men, eight hours a day for a period of eight days, adds up to a total of 332,800 man hours to date. Laugh that off. The average man believes that this strike is merely a trial balloon sent up by labor leaders who are anxious to know if the president meant what

## THE OLD SCRAPBOOK

By "Bob" Sutton

Good Morning:

One day out of the year is especially set apart to give thanks for blessings received. It should be one of the happiest days, for a grateful mind and heart is a happy one, and he enjoys much who is thankful for little.

I met a man last December, who said he was going to "swear off" on New Year's. Since then he's been swearing on and off!

People who spend so much time "raking others over the coals" will some day find themselves raking coals somewhere else!

Everything comes to him who goes after the things that other people are waiting for!

LETTER TO A FRIEND

I think about you often, And I'd write you every day; But there's so very little That seems worth-while to say.

It either rains, or doesn't, It's either hot or cold; My news is uninteresting, Or else has all been told.

I think of your smile often, Though I can't recall your touch; But distance lends enchantment, And I miss you very much. The only thing that matters, Is the fact that you are there And I am here without you, And it's lonesome everywhere.

—John E. Tyler

Remember: A diamond with many flaws is more valuable than a perfect pebble!

he said when he asserted that labor was to lose none of its gains on account of the rearmament program. They, we believe, are anxious to know if they may use the strike weapon with impunity to gain from the employing public the last cent that the traffic will bear.

The average man believes that this great country has achieved its greatness because it was founded on the principle of equality and he denies the right of a group, large or small, to endanger the life and liberty of all of us because of selfish interests. Surely there is one bureau in existence in Washington that could investigate the merits of the case of Voultee Corporation versus its employees and come to a fair and unbiased settlement.

Surely, the President armed with power as he is, has the right to stop this evil thing and serve notice to all who would foster subversive activities. We average people believe that he can and should do this—and do it at once. Are we to be saved from a fate like that of France by a strong government, or are we like France going down to bitter defeat because of a weak and vacillating administration? Time is growing short and we will soon know the answers to some of these questions.