

SEEN & HEARD

BY HENDY W. CLUNE

SWORDS BEFORE BREAKFAST

IT WAS 11 o'clock in the morning and the slim young woman with the white even teeth and coal black hair wore a sleeveless evening gown, which would not be exactly come il faut at the Dobbs tea dance, but did very well indeed in the Main Street Frack Show.

The young woman in the evening dress had just come out for her first platform performance of the day, and I was waiting for her. She was a lady sword swallower, and I was not a little curious to know how one became a sword swallower, anyway. It wasn't I was sure, an inherited predilection; anything that could be explained by the Mendelian law.

Johnnie Reeves Jr., the press agent for the show (Johnnie says he is Michigan, '77, and knows by heart 5,000 quotations from Constantine), presented me to her and I made a deep bow, as to a lady of distinction. And perhaps such is Miss Vivian Dunning, who swallows not only one, but three swords simultaneously, almost down to their gilded hilts.

She smiled at my question as to how she had come by her art, and answered rather loosely. "Oh, you know how you pick up such things."

"Picking them up, yes," I said. "Swords, and such. But you pick 'em up and swallow 'em. You can't do that by mirrors. Now I couldn't swallow a sword, for money or marbles. I wouldn't even want to try."

"Tell him your story," urged Johnnie. "The man's a newspaper reporter."

"Well," said Miss Dunning, giving her slim hips a gentle pat, "I come from Minneapolis. 'No, no," said Johnnie. "Tell him the truth. Just the way it is."

Miss Dunning smiled, and became naive. "I came from Princeton, Minn.," she said. "I got sick of farm life. One night I went to a dance in the town hall. There was a carnival in town. I met the sword swallower. He asked me to join the show. So I joined the show, first by eating first, and married him. I thought working on a carnival show would be a pleasant way to see the world."

"There," said Johnnie Reeves Jr., with a satisfied nod. "Now she's on the level."

Miss Dunning's husband, the sword swallower, who doubted as the iron yielded man (with a hook in his eye), Miss Dunning proudly explained, once he had been able to drag a motor car through any level Main Street, laughed, her small sword, "I'd it past the mirror first, and then just slip it into the esophagus," she said. "That was all at first. You got to start easy, swallowing swords."

I could believe that. Miss Dunning was going on with her disquisition, when the lecturer called her to the platform, where a practical demonstration of sword swallowing bore out the theories on her art she had started to expound. She seemed omnivorous, with cold sharp steel. Fifteen, 20, 25 inches, the sword swallower slipped down her graceful length, and as well as one may, with a mouthful of blade, Miss Dunning smiled. She swallowed two swords at once, bent over while they were still in her throat, and then I knew I was in the presence of genius; for the lecturer solemnly announced, "You are now beholding a feat that no other sword swallower alive dares attempt, say nothing of accomplishing."

Miss Dunning withdrew the flexible blades, straightened her lithe form, and with a delicate gesture wiped them dry with a rag on the sword rack. After that, she swallowed seven or eight swords, she swallowed a long neon tube, which pinkly tinted her bare throat, and came off the platform with a little moue of apology.

"I haven't had breakfast yet," she explained. "I can always do better after eating. I swallow 20 inches, sometimes as many as 25 inches, after a hearty meal."

I questioned Miss Dunning about this. "Why," she explained, "when your stomach's loaded, it sags a little, and you get longer reach down your gullet."

DEATH RATE IN CITY HITS RECORD LOW

Healthiest Year in History Shown in Figures

Rochester last year, at a time when the birth rate jumped sharply, says the healthiest 12 months in history, the Health Bureau disclosed yesterday in a preliminary review of vital statistics.

Lowest of all time was the death rate, 9.7 per 1,000 of population. In the year ending Dec. 31, 1937, the rate was 10.4, which also was the lowest recorded to date.

Only 2,290 persons died in the year which brought 5,476 babies into the world, a net gain in population (on the basis of deaths against live births) of 3,186. That compares with 2,298 deaths and 6,190 births in 1937 when the net gain was 3,892.

According to Henry A. Lieberwurst, registrar of vital statistics under Dr. Arthur M. Johnson, health bureau director, the birth rate for 1938 is 14.1 per thousand of population, compared with 13.3 in 1937.

Above State Average This rate was believed to be above the state average, and at the same time the death rate was known to be below the state average. New York City, which also saw the most healthful year in its history achieved a death rate of 8.8, compared with 10.4 in the preceding year.

Principal credit for the drop belongs to modern medical science which has wiped out certain diseases once epidemic in childhood and which, through new and highly efficacious serums, has cut the death rate of pneumonia by approximately one-third. It was said at the Health Bureau.

Particularly proud are Health Bureau officials of the slight but maternal mortality. Preliminary figures show that the number of mothers who died in childbirth is the lowest in all history, far below the state average and also below the best levels of the nation.

In terms of rates there were 23 deaths for every 1,000 confinements in 1938, this comparing with 24 in 1937.

In connection with infant and maternal health the statistical picture here was somewhat mixed. Infant mortality rate (deaths of children in the first year of life) which had been dropping steadily for several years as better care was given infants and as scientific medicine wiped out infant diseases of an intestinal nature which once took a tremendous toll.

The infant mortality rate rose from 32 per thousand births to 30. There were no deaths from measles, and no deaths from diphtheria. Rochester, Lieberwurst pointed out, has had but one infant from diphtheria since 1932, and that an avoidable death occurring in 1934. There were only three deaths from whooping cough, two less than in the previous year.

One death from typhoid and another from scarlet fever spoiled the clean record. Rochester has maintained as far as these diseases go. Neither case had its origin in Rochester, however. It was understood.

Enfances Drop An influence helping in the achievement of lower death rate is the increase in the number of fatal accidents from all causes, including automobiles, drownings, home and industrial cases. In 1938 total deaths attributable to accidental causes numbered 184, against 207 in 1937.

Police and coroners yesterday mobile inflicted injuries in Rochester in 1938 than in the previous year when 70 persons died. This, however, does not give the true local picture of auto-fatality reduction because persons brought here from outside the city and then dying in local hospitals are "credited" to the death rate.

The number of suicides in 1938, however, was six greater than in the preceding year, 60 taking their own lives last year as compared with 54 in 1937.

Predicting a continuation of the new low death rate, and basing an opinion that with improved economic trends the birth rate will continue at least at its present level, health Bureau authorities called the statistical health picture of Rochester in the past 12 months "a very good one of which our citizens may be proud."

Three Hurt Slightly When Autos Collide

Collision of two cars at Mt. Hope Avenue and Reservoir Street early yesterday resulted in minor injuries to three persons.

10 EXECUTIONS SET

Execution—Ten executions are scheduled for January at Sing Sing Prison, starting with three next Thursday. Five convicted murderers will die Jan. 26, with at least one execution set for each day Thursday. All the doomed men have lost appeals for new trials. Prison officials were unable to recall a previous month when executions were set for each week.

Accepting Best Wishes from Loyal Party Aides



To these extended hands came greetings of loyal Republicans from all over the county as Arthur Lochte, chairman; Mrs. Jessica Weis, women's leader, and Samuel B. Dicker, acting mayor, from left, formed receiving line at reception in party headquarters in Union Trust building. Carnations were badges of the day.

MISSING GIRL FOUND IN CITY

The Bureau of Missing Persons thanked The Democrat and Chronicle for quick results yesterday.

Margaret Lampe, 13, missing from her Syracuse home since Dec. 12, was located yesterday morning after a citizen had recognized her picture and description in the morning paper.

Police Officer John Koepplin and Charles O'Toole said a man called the Fourth Precinct yesterday morning and said the girl was working as a domestic for Mr. and Mrs. Frank Medwin, 188 St. Casimir St. The two officers went to the Medwin home and found the girl. She told the officers she had obtained the job through a want ad two days after she came here from Syracuse and had been working there since that time. She said she told the Medwins she was 18 years old.

Woman Sought In Stabbing Case

Police and detectives yesterday sought a woman believed to have stabbed Henry Poindexter, 29, Negro, of 85 Nassau St., several times yesterday with a knife as he slept in bed in his home.

Poindexter was summoned to the Nassau Street address at 4:41 a. m. where, they said, they found Poindexter had been stabbed seven times with a knife or other sharp instrument. Taken to Genesee Hospital, he was treated for superficial wounds and discharged.

Officers said Poindexter was asleep when a woman was admitted to the house. She went at once to Poindexter's bedroom and stabbed him, police were told.

Postal Authorities to Destroy 16,000 Illegible Holiday Cards

Rochester postal authorities today will be confronted by one of their most gloomy tasks—the job of examining and then destroying about 16,000 cherry Christmas and New Year's greeting cards.

Incorrect addresses and illegible names made it impossible for the postmen to deliver the cards. Because all were mailed under the special one and one-half cent rate, they are not entitled to the handling given first class or sealed mail.

Assistant Postmaster Charles J. Fleckenstein estimated the number of illegible cards to be less than last year's total. But postal authorities take no cheer from that, because it is still adding to the realization that so many well-meant greetings never

GOP Salutes County Chief At New Years Reception

The swing was to Republican headquarters yesterday. From the four corners of Monroe County to Rochester's Four Corners, 2,000 loyal Republicans tramped to salute their leader at a gala revival of the county chairman's reception in Republican headquarters, Union Trust Building.

Passing along a long reception line during which they acquired the badge of the day, the old-fashioned political carnation, the guests moved upon smiling Arthur Lochte, county chairman, and gracious Mrs. Frank Medwin, 188 St. Casimir St. The two officers went to the Medwin home and found the girl. She told the officers she had obtained the job through a want ad two days after she came here from Syracuse and had been working there since that time. She said she told the Medwins she was 18 years old.

Police and detectives yesterday sought a woman believed to have stabbed Henry Poindexter, 29, Negro, of 85 Nassau St., several times yesterday with a knife as he slept in bed in his home.

Poindexter was summoned to the Nassau Street address at 4:41 a. m. where, they said, they found Poindexter had been stabbed seven times with a knife or other sharp instrument. Taken to Genesee Hospital, he was treated for superficial wounds and discharged.

Officers said Poindexter was asleep when a woman was admitted to the house. She went at once to Poindexter's bedroom and stabbed him, police were told.

Postal authorities today will be confronted by one of their most gloomy tasks—the job of examining and then destroying about 16,000 cherry Christmas and New Year's greeting cards.

Incorrect addresses and illegible names made it impossible for the postmen to deliver the cards. Because all were mailed under the special one and one-half cent rate, they are not entitled to the handling given first class or sealed mail.

Assistant Postmaster Charles J. Fleckenstein estimated the number of illegible cards to be less than last year's total. But postal authorities take no cheer from that, because it is still adding to the realization that so many well-meant greetings never

Rapp to Assemble Full County Slate For Fall Election

Ex-Mayor Avoids GOP Reception, Cites Plan to Start Drive at Once, Again Hits 'Broken Promises'

Councilman Lester B. Rapp, retired mayor, last night announced plans for a complete independent city-county ticket next fall, thereby bringing an outright break with the Republican organization.

He couched the announcement with the statement he was beginning immediately to build his organization in preparation for the fight.

The sandy-haired 19th Warder's decision, not wholly unexpected following his dramatic resignation as titular head of the city when the Republican organization balked at increasing his pay as mayor from \$750 to \$2,000, means that three others will run with him for district councilmen next fall and that he will make a bid for every position on the ticket, including City Court judges.

If carried out, it will be the second successive municipal election campaign in the city in which an independent ticket was in the field. In 1937 the Citizens Party was formed following rejection by the then ruling Democrats of former Mayor Charles Stanton and former Councilman Julius R. Hoarey Jr.

Avoids Reception Rapp's plans were disclosed in commenting on his absence from the New Years Day reception of Arthur Lochte, Republican county chairman. He said he "could see no reason for attending," and announced he was starting his "campaign."

"I'm not going to take this lying down," he said of the salary snub. "If I am going to put on a contest with headquarters, I have got to have support."

"I will have a complete ticket in the field, probably a candidate for every job on the machine."

Whether he brings the fight in the September primary or waits until the general election depends entirely upon what support he uncovers among organization Republicans, Rapp admitted.

"If I am assured of plenty of organization support, I will go into the primaries," he said. "Otherwise, it will be in the general election."

The South District councilman readily anticipated he would "not be renominated" when his term as councilman expires this year.

"There is no reason why I should go into the field alone," he said of his complete ticket scheme. "Even if I won out that way, I could not accomplish anything. It is an easy job to win 10 jobs as one and if I win it means that people who think as I do also win."

"This ticket will not stop at councilman. Don't forget there are others running this year, City Court judges, supervisors and even county clerk."

The former mayor displayed some bitterness in discussing the 1937 Republican platform that led to his break with the organization. He charged that the platform did not contain a plank dealing with a \$750 salary for mayor and said he had "challenged them to show where it did."

Rapp also indicted the Republican leadership for "breaking its promises" in connection with the raise.

"Now, they have got to tell me and tell the people why they did it," he said.

Miss Council Activity Rapp's campaign against the organization will be carried into City Council, but will not be designed to "disrupt the Council," the new-found Council independent declared. Even though he does not expect much support from other Republicans, Rapp plans to introduce resolutions dealing with the platform.

The first independent reaction he will present is scheduled for introduction a week from tonight, he said, when he will ask for endorsement of the Legislative program of the State Conference of Mayors.

"That program includes my recommendation that the state pay 50 per cent of the cost of WPA materials now paid for by municipalities," Rapp pointed out.

Performance-proved in Alaska's Dampest, Coldest Weather!

FATHER HUBBARD, the "Glacier Priest," explorer, scientist, missionary to the Eskimos... originator of the famous Hubbard Cloth.

Hubbard Cloth

in Children's Snow Suits

\$10⁹⁵ COMPLETE
(Separately: Pants \$5.95, Jackets, \$6.95)

No other cloth offers the combined good points of Hubbard Cloth. Woven of fine quality, long staple American cotton, it is exceptionally light in weight, yet extremely durable. Treated by a patented process which makes it not only amazingly cold, wind and water-resistant, but partially porous to allow the body to breathe, thus making it perfect for active outdoor wear. We have had Hubbard Cloth tailored into these fine children's snow suits with a soft fleece lining. Suspender top pants—sizes 4 to 12, in navy, brown, or tan. Zipper jacket top, with or without hood, sizes 4 to 16, in navy, brown, green, or tan.

McFarlin Clothing Co.

195 MAIN STREET EAST
"WHERE THE GOOD CLOTHES COME FROM"