

SOUVENIR

Ripley's

Believe It or Not!

MUSEUM



ST. AUGUSTINE, FLORIDA

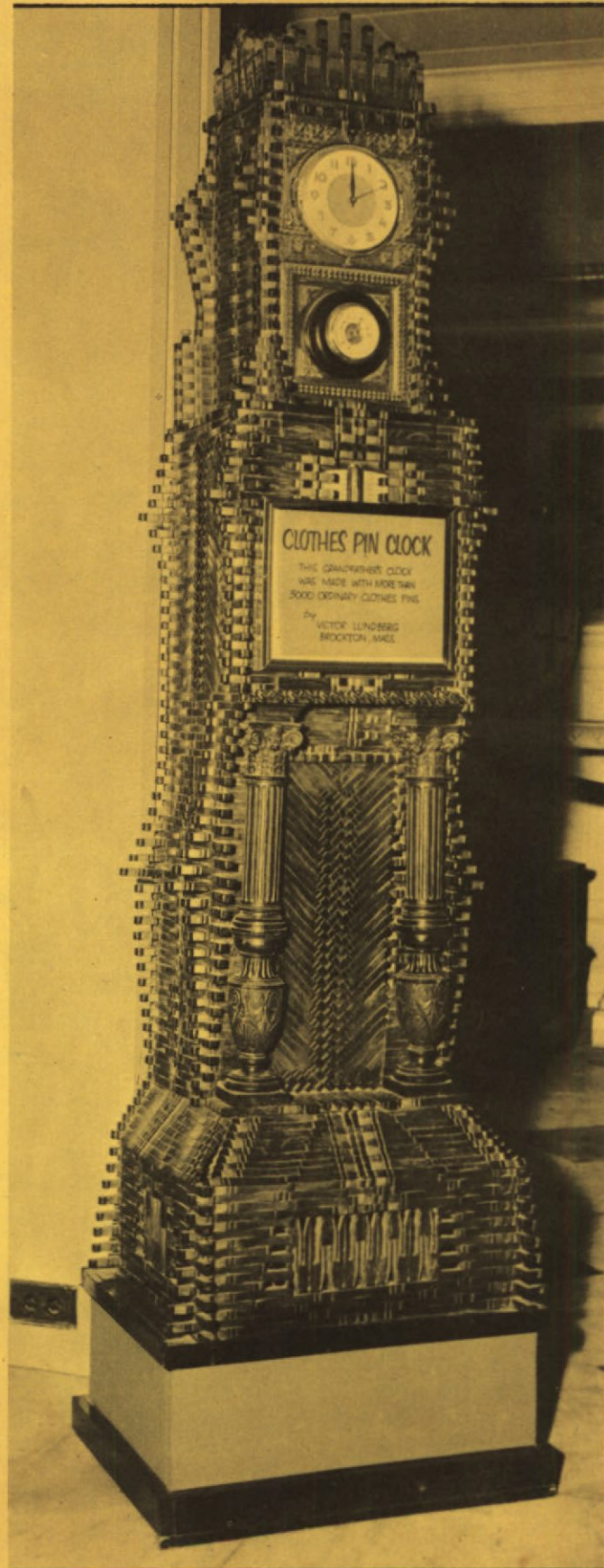
25¢



DEMON MASK
WITH INSERTED HUMAN
TEETH AND HUMAN HAIR.
JAPAN 1800



**PORTRAIT BUST OF MR. RIPLEY
SCULPTURED BY A BLIND MAN
MARK SHOESMITH
- TOTALLY BLIND
CREATED THIS EXCELLENT WORK OF ART
SOLELY BY MEANS OF HIS SENSE OF TOUCH**



CLOTHES PIN CLOCK
THIS GRANDEST CLOCK
ARE MADE WITH MORE THAN
5000 ORDINARY CLOTHES PINS
BY VICTOR LUNDBERG
BROOKTON, MASS.

THE STORY OF ROBERT L. RIPLEY

Ripley *Believe It or Not!*

No other name and no other phrase have gripped the imagination and interest of people throughout the world to such an extent and for such a long period of time as "Believe It or Not — Ripley."

Ripley drew and described four to seven oddities every day of the week for more than 80,000,000 newspaper readers in every part of the globe. His syndicated cartoons are printed in 17 languages in 38 countries and appear in over 300 newspapers. His fame has been augmented by motion pictures, radio broadcasts, television, and numerous books.

During the 40 years in which his work has been published, Ripley visited 198 countries — more countries than any other single human being — in quest of the odd and unusual. One day he could be found posing with a child mother of Java; another with a Papuan cannibal chief, or with the "Monkey Man" of India, or with a fierce Zulu tribesman. If he was not en route to Cochin-China or to some other far-

flung corner of the earth, he might be found on his private island on Long Island Sound, New York. He had been in China more often than in his New York offices.

His passion for travel reached such a point that he felt he was in a "rut" when he stayed in one place for more than a few months. His ambition was to visit every country in the world to search for strange and fascinating things. It is understandable, therefore, why the Duke of Windsor gave him the title of "the Modern Marco Polo."

Ripley lived alone in the midst of reminders of the many countries he had visited. The 29 rooms on his island estate and the 20 rooms of his New York City studio were filled with some of the most unique objects of the world, including an amazing collection of Oriental art, African carvings, Aztec masks, and what is said to be the world's largest collection of steins and goblets. Along with the rare and beautiful he had in-

terspersed such objects as the Iron Maiden of Nuremberg (a famous medieval torture device), a Buddhist shrine, the three-foot shell of a "man-eating-clam," an aquarium with fish that swim backward, and a wooden statue which a Japanese artist made more life-like by embellishing it with his own hair, teeth, fingernails and toenails. Ripley valued his large collection at \$2,000,000.

"But the most unusual thing in either of his two homes," his housekeeper always said, "was Mr. Ripley himself." He was, in truth an amazing character in himself.

He drew upside down.

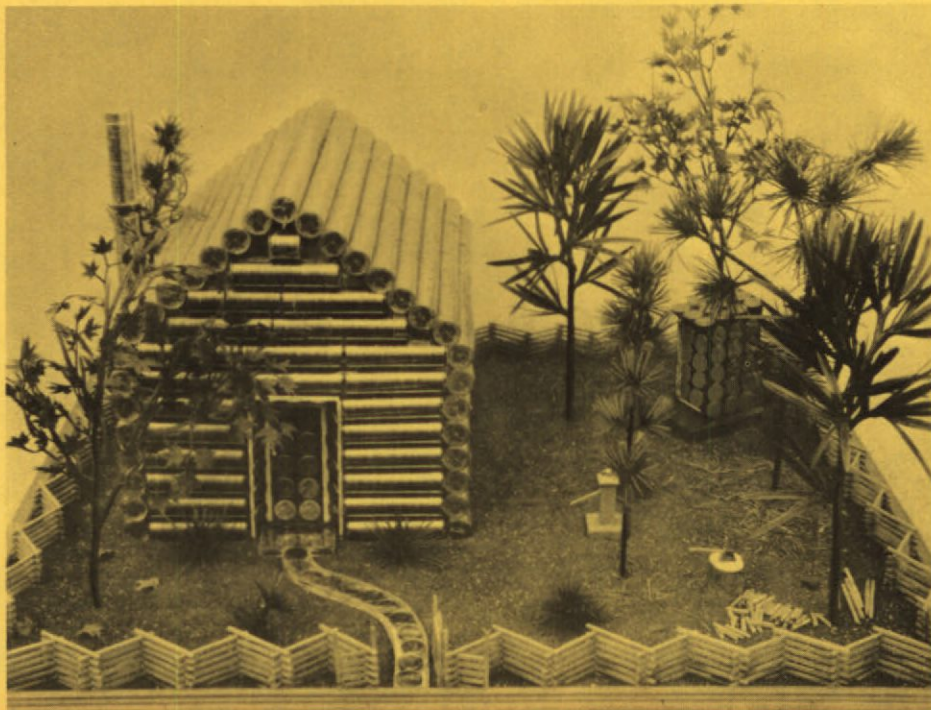
He generally worked from 7 to 11 in the morning on his cartoons.

He hadn't taken a vacation in over 30 years (his job was his vacation).

He never failed to have a cartoon in the paper each day for 35 years, due to "good luck" and good health.

He had never been wrong, to which he added "I will promise never to be wrong again."

He enjoyed the honor of being called a liar more often than any other man on earth because such an accusation proved that his Believe-It-or-Nots were truly difficult-to-believe FACTS.



LINCOLN'S LOG CABIN

MADE WITH 9600 LINCOLN PENNIES

The frame of the cabin was made with over 75 feet of brass to hold the heavy weight of so many coins. The fence was made with 486 ordinary kitchen matches. This replica was awarded the President's citation for the most outstanding exhibit at the California Numismatic Convention of 1961.

Made by ERNEST HOOD, 3613 Schaefer Street, Culver City, Calif.

MADE WITH 9600 LINCOLN PENNIES



He found his work easier to do each day because of the endless parade of oddities which crossed his desk daily. His supply of material was so tremendous that he could never have run out of items for his cartoons, radio broadcasts, television shows, and books.

He claimed he never ate lunch, although he took an extraordinary interest in the luncheon plates of his guests, sampling a bit here and there.

He never smoked or played cards.

He wore only bow ties and his favorite garment was a bath robe.

He had several cars; yet he could not drive.

He was a bachelor.

He loved animals and encouraged wild life, including about 20 pheasants, to stay on his island estate.

He was born on Christmas Day.

He still used the front door of his boyhood home, although he lived 3,000 miles from his birthplace.

Like many other successful Americans, Robert L. Ripley achieved his fame and fortune only after long years of back-breaking work and countless disappointments. He was a small-town boy, born of poor parents, in Santa Rosa, California. His father, a carpenter, died



ST. PATRICK

Called the Apostle of Ireland. Born in Britain about the year 385, was remarkable for his practice of humility. His invincible spirit never slackened in prayer.

This fine wood sculpture of St. Patrick was brought to this country from Rome where Mr. Ripley obtained it.

when Ripley was twelve. LeRoy, as young Ripley had been named, helped support his mother, younger brother and sister by polishing gravestones after school and by pitching for the local ball club for which he was paid in small change.

During the summer months, he drew posters for local ball games, the work through which he landed a job as sports cartoonist for the San Francisco Bulletin at \$8 a week, later increased to \$10. After a year at this work, Ripley was fired for asking for a \$2.50 rise in salary. Thereupon, he landed a similar job at the New York Globe. While there, Ripley was confronted on one particular day with turning in a cartoon to his editor with only dull sports copy and little current news available for sketching. After drawing numerous cartoons throughout the day and destroying them all, he sketched a series of unusual happenings. Studying his completed cartoon — just another day's work and a bad one at that, as he thought — Ripley suddenly scratched out the original caption and wrote in its place: "Believe It or Not!" Then, dismissing the matter from his mind, he went home — much ashamed of his "poor day's work."

On the following day, December 19, 1918, the first

"Believe It or Not" cartoon appeared. Much to the artist's amazement, it drew considerable comment from both readers and fellow newspapermen. From then on, the demand grew until the "Believe It or Not" feature moved to the New York Post. In 1929, a contract was signed with King Features Syndicate, the organization which now handles world-wide distribution of the feature.

Success came to him suddenly on the day he published the fact that "Lindbergh was the 67th man to make a non-stop flight over the Atlantic Ocean." Lindbergh did make the first solo nonstop flight. He was, however, preceded by one airplane with two men and by two dirigibles with a total of 64 men.

BELIEVE IT OR NOT receives thousands of letters each year and there is a large staff assigned solely to handling this large volume of correspondence. Other members of the large staff spend their entire time in research, seeking the proof which must accompany each unusual fact while linguists are constantly at work translating the curiosities into more than a score of languages.

When Max Schuster, of Simon & Schuster, suggested that he write-up a collection of Believe-It-or-

Nots for a book, Ripley replied, "I'm just a two-cent man" (the price of a newspaper at the time). The book was published to sell for \$2.50. About 3,000,000 copies have been sold. New books are also published annually in the United States, England, Australia, India, Japan, Portugal and Mexico. He was also the author of "Ripley's Ramble 'Round the World," published in 1924; "The Handball Guide," in 1925; "Boxing Record Books," in 1926, and "Ripley's Ramble 'Round South America," also in 1926. Several new pocket book editions are printed annually.

At Chicago's Century of Progress Exposition, in 1933, was introduced the first of the famous "Odditoriums" by means of which millions of people were permitted to see for themselves some of the outstanding curiosities which have appeared in daily cartoons and on the radio and television. The Odditorium was also featured at the World Expositions in San Diego, Cleveland, New York and San Francisco.

He was the first artist ever to send a cartoon by radio — from London to the New York Tribune in 1927.

He was also the first to send a drawing by telephone — from Chicago to New York, after the second Tunney-Dempsey fight the some year. He broadcast the first radio program from mid-ocean to a nation-wide network in 1931, and in 1934 he was the first to broadcast to every nation of the world simultaneously, assisted by a corps of linguists who translated his message into various tongues. He was first to broadcast from Australia to the United States in 1932 and the first to broadcast from Buenos Aires to New York in 1933.

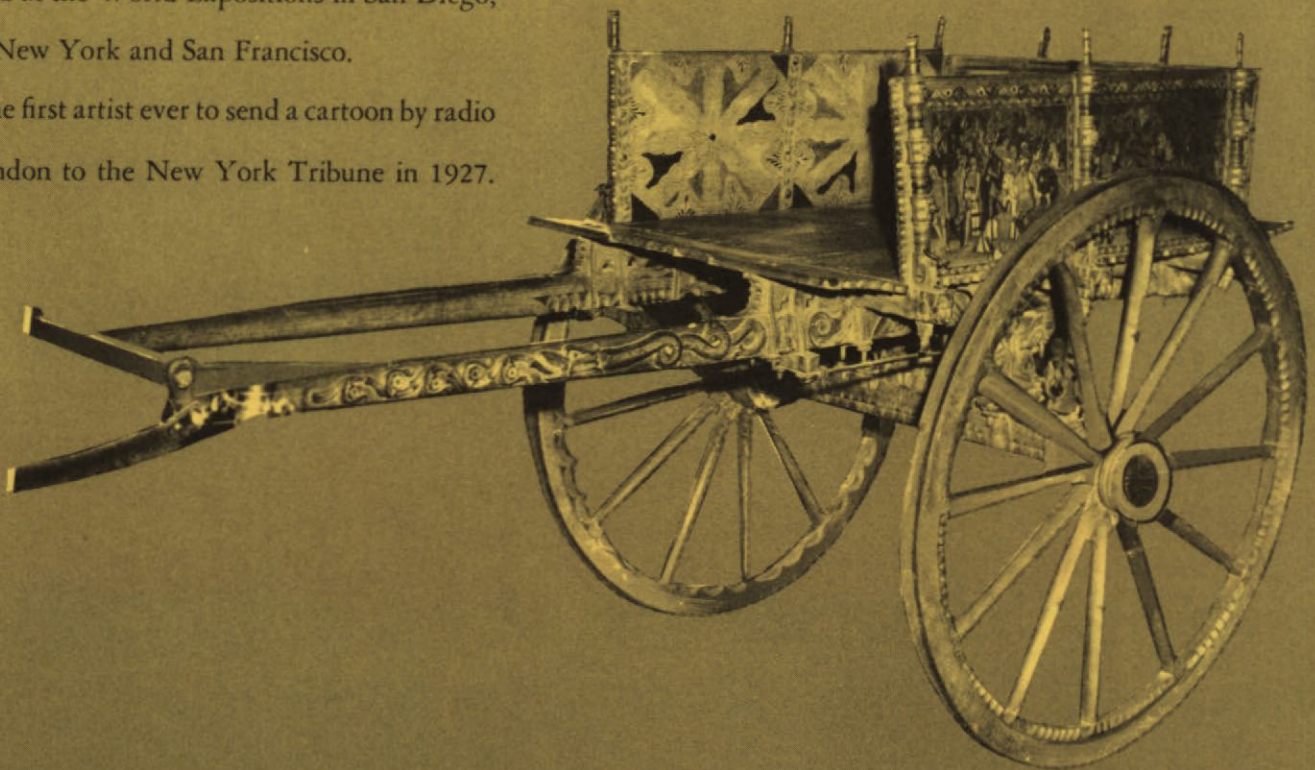
Sicilian Donkey Cart

(Nineteenth Century)

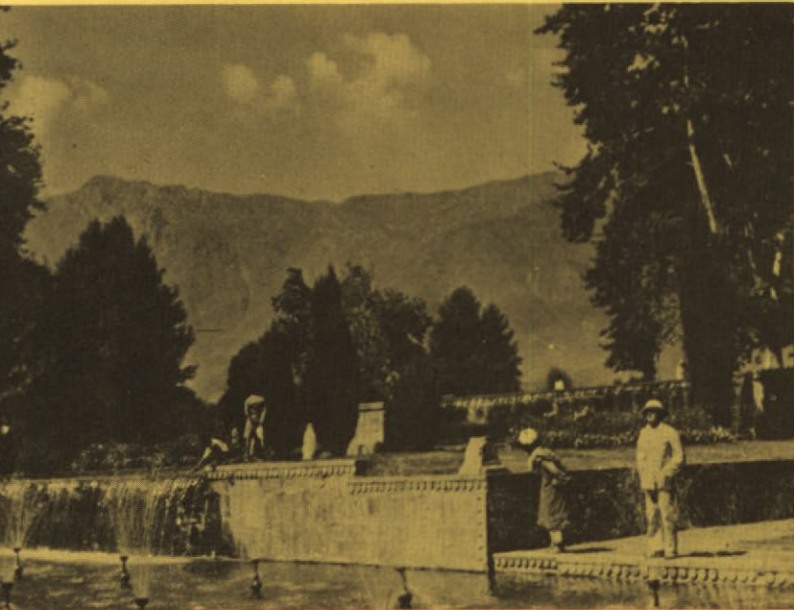
From Palermo, Italy

Many of the old customs and usages in Palermo are going, if not gone, but the well-known donkey carts (Caretti) still remain as survivals of early Medieval modes of workmanship of three craftsmen — the blacksmith, the wood carver, and the *indoratore* or gilder.

The finest work is put on the little figure subjects carved either on the cross piece under the cart at the back, where it is best seen, or — Believe It or Not — on the axle, where it is not seen at all!



AROUND THE WORLD WITH ROBERT RIPLEY



SHALIMAR GARDEN, KASHMIR

Ripley in the Shalimar Garden, Srinagar, Kashmir, India.



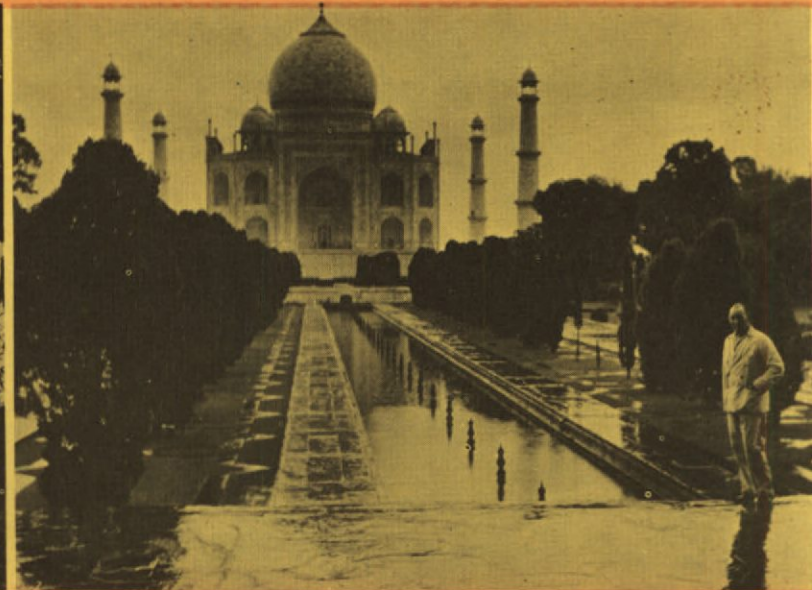
ZULU RICKSHAW, AFRICA

No journey to Africa is complete without a ride in a rickshaw drawn by one of these colorful Zulu fellows such as Ripley has.



ROYAL DANCERS, SIAM

Though naturally of a beautiful bronze complexion these royal Gambodian dancers of Bangkok, Siam, dip their faces in snow-white flour before their performances to make their skin a chalky white. They are the real "flower girls" of Siam.



RIPLEY AT THE TAJ MAHAL



RUINS OF PARTHENON

Ripley inside the ruins of the Parthenon — the most beautiful and perfect building ever erected — on the Acropolis, Athens, Greece.



MARBLE GATEWAY, ATHENS

Ripley views a unique and intriguing bust of solid marble that once adorned the gateway of a huge ruin near Athens, Greece.



GROTESQUE LION OF PEIPING

Ripley beside a great, grotesque stone lion in Peiping, China.



HEAD HUNTERS OF PAPUA

The head-hunting, cannibalistic, black men of Papua stop their dance long enough for "Believe It Or Not" Ripley to inspect their picturesque and colorful head dresses.

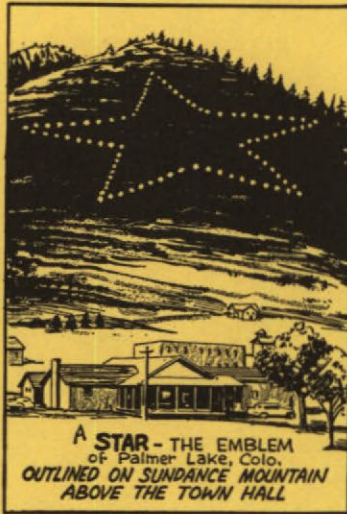
Ripley's Believe It or Not!



Thomas PITT
 WAS ELECTED TO
 THE BRITISH
 PARLIAMENT
 IN 1715
 AND AT THE SAME
 TIME HIS 3 SONS
 WERE EACH ELECTED
 TO PARLIAMENT
 FROM DIFFERENT
 DISTRICTS



A WHITE RADISH
 24 INCHES LONG AND WEIGHING 3 1/2 LB.
 Grown by ROBERT BAUER, Peoria, Ill.



A STAR - THE EMBLEM
 of Palmer Lake, Colo.
 OUTLINED ON SUNDANCE MOUNTAIN
 ABOVE THE TOWN HALL

9-9 © 1959, King Features Syndicate, Inc., World rights reserved.



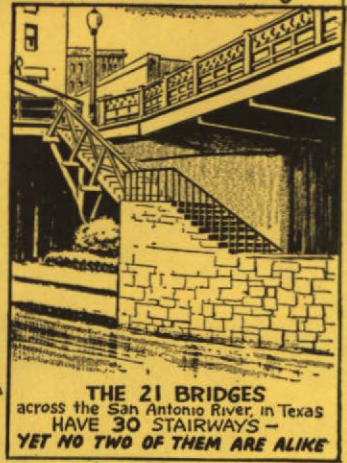
A MONUMENT
 to DANIEL DEFOE
 OVER HIS GRAVE IN
 Bunhill Fields Cemetery, London
 WAS BUILT WITH DONATIONS
 RAISED BY AN APPEAL
 LIMITED TO BOYS AND
 GIRLS WHO ENJOYED
 ROBINSON CRUSOE

Ripley's Believe It or Not!



9-10

JAMES WATTIE (1789-1872)
 PARISH SCHOOLMASTER
 of Crimond, Scotland.
 ALWAYS WORE 3 SETS OF FLANNEL
 UNDERWEAR AND 4 GREATCOATS
 ONE ON TOP OF THE OTHER
 - EVEN DURING THE HOTTEST
 DAYS OF SUMMER



THE 21 BRIDGES
 across the San Antonio River, in Texas
 HAVE 30 STAIRWAYS -
YET NO TWO OF THEM ARE ALIKE

© 1959, King Features Syndicate, Inc., World rights reserved.

THE BARKING
FROG
 of Texas
YAPS LIKE
A DOG



Mrs. HOWARD
NICHOLS
 of American
 Fork, Utah
 HAS PREPARED
 HOT MUSH
 AND MILK AS
 HER HUSBAND'S
 BREAKFAST
 EVERY MORNING
 FOR 30 YEARS
YET NEVER
TASTED IT HERSELF

Ripley's Believe It or Not!



9-11

THE GREAT PAGODA of TANJORE
 India
A SINGLE BLOCK OF GRANITE
 WEIGHING 80 TONS
 WAS LIFTED 216 FEET TO THE PAGODA'S PEAK
 900 YEARS AGO BY BEING PUSHED LABORIOUSLY
 UP AN INCLINED PLATFORM 5 MILES LONG -
A TASK THAT REQUIRED 12 YEARS



Sir Lewis Bellenden
 SECOND RANKING JURIST IN
 SCOTLAND, HAD SENTENCED
 MANY "WITCHES" TO PRISON -
 YET HE WAS SO TERRIFIED BY A
 MAGICIAN'S ACT OF WITCHCRAFT
 THAT HE DIED OF FRIGHT!
 1591



A HAKE
 PREDATORY FISH OF
 THE COD FAMILY IS
 CAUGHT ANNUALLY
 IN St. Ives, England
 AND THEN THROWN
 BACK INTO THE SEA
 - AFTER BEING GIVEN A
 SYMBOLIC WHIPPING
 AS A WARNING NOT TO
 PREY ON OTHER FISH

Ripley's Believe It or Not!



9-12

THE RULER WHO ALWAYS
WALKED A TIGHT ROPE TO RELAX.
OMAR II
 RULER OF THE MOHAMMEDAN WORLD
 FROM 717 TO 720, RESTED AFTER HIS
 HOURS OF MEDITATION AND PRAYER
BY WALKING A TIGHT ROPE!
 HE DIED OF A SLOW POISON
 ADMINISTERED TO HIM DURING THE
 ENTIRE DURATION OF HIS REIGN



THE FISHTAIL
PALM of India and Ceylon
 BLOOMS ONLY ONCE IN ITS
 LIFETIME - AND THEN DIES

© 1959, King Features Syndicate, Inc., World rights reserved.



THE WITCH HOLE
 of DOAKSVILLE, OKLA.
 GETS ITS NAME FROM THE
 FACT THAT ALTHOUGH WATER
 FLOWS INTO IT CONSTANTLY
ITS LEVEL NEVER VARIES

Ripley's Believe It or Not!



THE BOOK THAT WAS SENT TO THE GALLOWES!
 London
"THE BOOK OF SPORTS"
 IN WHICH KING JAMES I GRANTED HIS SUBJECTS PERMISSION TO ENGAGE IN SPORTS, GAMES AND DANCING ON SUNDAYS, ON CROMWELL'S ORDERS WAS TRIED, CONVICTED AND HANGED! (1651)



MOTHER MARY CECILIA REED
 of Elmhurst Academy of the Sacred Heart, Providence, R.I.
WAS A TEACHER FOR 67 YEARS



PEANUT WITH A FEATHER INSIDE THE SHELL
 Submitted by SIDNEY SIMMONS, Detroit, Mich.
 © 1969, King Features Syndicate, Inc., World rights reserved.



THE TEMPLE THAT HONORS A BABOON
 Ashmunain, Egypt
 ANCIENT EGYPTIANS CONSIDERED THE BABOON A SACRED ANIMAL

Ripley's Believe It or Not!



A GONDOLA BALL WAS HELD BY A CHAMPAGNE FIRM IN LONDON'S SAVOY HOTEL - AND FOR ONE NIGHT THE COURTYARD WAS CONVERTED INTO A LAGOON
 1906



THE MAGNALE TOWER in Livorno, Italy
 LEANS 4 FEET OUT OF THE PERPENDICULAR



Mrs. LOUISE HOFFMAN of University City, Mo., HAS NEVER HAD A TOOTH FILLED NOR A TOOTHACHE IN 70 YEARS

© 1969, King Features Syndicate, Inc., World rights reserved.

Ripley's Believe It or Not!

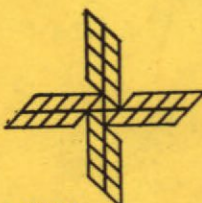


THE STRANGEST WATER GOGGLES IN THE WORLD

FISHERMEN of the Marquesas Islands, in the Pacific, WHO CAN STAY UNDER-WATER FOR 4 MINUTES, RELEASE 2 AIR BUBBLES FROM THEIR NOSTRILS AND GENTLY PRESS THEM INTO THEIR EYE SOCKETS TO SERVE AS GOGGLES!



THE CALIFORNIA BEAR
 NATURAL ROCK FORMATION
 Fort Bragg, Calif.



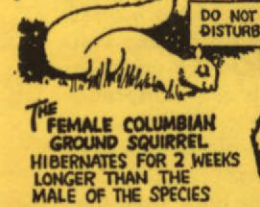
OPTICAL ILLUSION
 Drawn by WILKEUNE
 Abilene, Kans.



A GRANITE SIGNPOST 50 ft. HIGH erected at Chalfont-St. Peter, England, IN 1785
 BY A MAN WHO HAD ONCE LOST HIS WAY IN THE AREA

9-19 © 1969, King Features Syndicate, Inc., World rights reserved.

Ripley's Believe It or Not!



THE FEMALE COLUMBIAN GROUND SQUIRREL HIBERNATES FOR 2 WEEKS LONGER THAN THE MALE OF THE SPECIES



THE DUKE'S TOWER in Kirkton, Scotland, 60 FEET HIGH WAS ERRECTED BY THE DUKE OF GORDON TO COMMEMORATE A LAWSUIT OF MANY YEARS BY WHICH THE DUKE WON POSSESSION OF A CASTLE
 1825



ANNE, Lady Cobham WIFE OF SIR RICHARD TEMPLE, LOST \$100,000 BETTING ON A RACE STAGED WITH WORMS (1760)

© 1969, King Features Syndicate, Inc. World rights reserved.



THE ROCKING STONE of CORNWALL England A GIANT BOULDER SO DELICATELY BALANCED THAT THE WIND MAKES IT TEETER

9-19

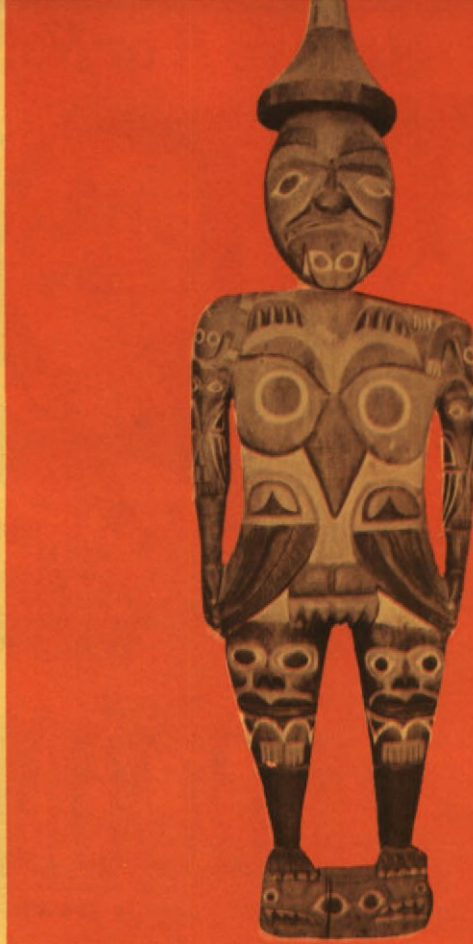


The Crucifix Fish

In the West Indies and South America natives obtain their crucifixes, with the figure on the cross, from the strange "Crucifix Fish" which is a member of the catfish family.

Ages ago, the devout indians and negroes of the islands discovered that on the skull of this fish there is a bone that closely resembles the figure on the cross. On the opposite side is the image of a Monk, with vestments over outspread arms blessing his people. They say that the rattling of a loose bone inside the skull echoes the rattle of the dice cast by Roman soldiers at the foot of the Cross.

The Crucifix Fish skeleton Ripley brought back from the tropics is displayed in a shrine like those used by the Carribean Natives.



Totem Pole

This totem pole is a replica of the Indian Doctor or Medicine Man of the Haidah Tribe of Alaska Indians known as the "Shaman". The two human figures upon the knee, represent twins, as all the ancestors for past hundred years bore twins. The frog coming out of his mouth represents the casting out of the evil spirits. The eagle covers his breast, the fearless Thunder Bird, Rampant. His protectors under the feet are two heads of Black Whale Killers, represents the Doctor is in charge of the fish food of the sea. The eagles upon his arms denote his fighting protectors, ready for the fray. The figure is 10 feet in height, 3 feet in width. It's the only one ever seen in the United States.



Tree
THAT GREW AROUND AN
IRON FENCE
Submitted by
CARL A. SCHMIDTALL
PEORIA, ILLINOIS

HORSESHOE
EMBEDDED in
a TREE ...
Submitted by
EVA HANLEY ...
COLUMBIA, KY.

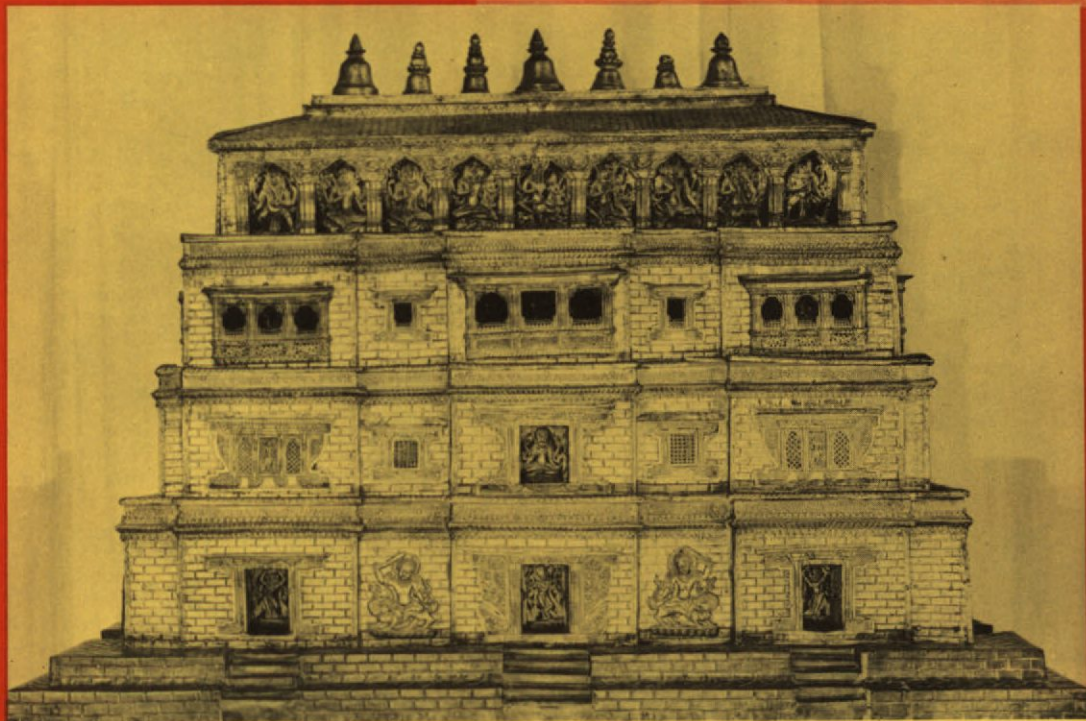
Ripley's — Believe It or Not!



Doll House

Depicting Theatrical Tableau — Actors and actresses in full Ceremonial Costume.

Construction, miniature work and hand carvings of house and base represents more than 53,000 hours of Craftsmanship.



Gold Plated Monastery of Khasty

High in the Himalaya Mountains of Nepal, not far from that greatest of all peaks, Mount Everest, there existed many generations ago a huge sacred monastery — known as the Monastery of Khasty — inhabited by 10,000 monks.

The lifelong ambition of every Nepalese was to visit the sacred edifice of Khasty at least once during his lifetime — but it was accessible only to the young and hardy, who were physically able to climb the difficult mountain passes and high, snow covered peaks.

To ease the consciences of devout pilgrims who were either old or weak, this exquisite miniature of gold plated copper was fashioned and installed in a monastery of easy access, where it remained for more than 350 years.

The monastery in which this miniature was sheltered for so long was destroyed by an earthquake in 1934. Quake looters stole the damaged miniature and brought it over the border to Darjeeling, India, where Mr. Ripley obtained it.



Inlaid Table

Containing more than 11,000 pieces using 29 different kinds of wood.

Made by Karl Finzer, a cabinet maker, Innsbruck, Austria, as a wedding gift for his daughter, who entered a convent and therefore could never take or use the table which took her father more than 9 years to complete.



SKULL BOWL

Head-hunting is deplored among savages, but to the most religious Tibetans, a human skull has proper place at the right of the priest's high altar. It is called "Thod Khrag" and Mr. Ripley brought this one back from that high Himalayan country called "the Roof of the World." When filled with all-powerful blood and wine, and its contents poured over the altar, it is believed to have power of bringing rain to parched land. Its touch is said to make poisonous snakes absolutely harmless. Made from the skull of a saint, surmounted by the Dorjé (the Thunderbolt of Indra), the bowl bears the inscription: "Om Mani Padme Hum" — the prayer which is supposed to induce happiness, prosperity, earthly knowledge and deliverance from enemies and all earthly evils.



RIPLEY AND THE IRON MAIDEN

The most famous instrument of torture and death in the world. Once entering within the loving embrace of this charming lady, the victim would truly abandon all hope. These sharp-pointed spikes would penetrate the victim through the skull, eyes, chest, and heart. It so mutilated the victim and so horrible was the appearance after being spiked, that a trap door was provided so the body could be dropped into the river which flowed beneath the dungeon in which this instrument was placed.

"THE FIRST BELIEVE IT OR NOT"

On December 19, 1918 — a young man named Robert Ripley was sitting before a drawing board in the art department of the old New York Globe, where he was working as a sports cartoonist. On that particular day, he found himself at a loss for an idea — not an uncommon occurrence with young cartoonists. The deadline, for the next day's paper was fast approaching, so, in desperation, he hurriedly gathered together a few athletic oddities that happened to be on his desk, made then into a cartoon which, for want of a better title, he captioned "Believe It Or Not." He sent this makeshift drawing down to the engravers and went home, thinking he had done a very bad day's work.

When the picture appeared next day, he was very much surprised to hear some considerable comment about it. The editor, Walter St. Dennis, suggested that he make another one if he *could gather together enough stunts*. Thereafter, he made a Believe-It-or-Not cartoon once a week.

That is, he made one a week until he met Joe Connolly. That happened one day some years later

as he was moving into the New York Athletic Club amid a confusion of bags, boxes, and suitcases. He was sitting on top of a trunk, a bit disgusted with it all, when a youthful-looking fellow walked through the open door of his room without preliminary, sat down on another trunk and said, "How would you like to draw a Believe-It-or-Not cartoon every day for the world's largest newspaper syndicate?"

That man was Connolly, then an executive of King Features, later head of the entire Hearst newspaper organization.

From that time on, a Believe-It-or-Not cartoon has appeared every day in over three hundred newspapers throughout the world.

Since that day, more than forty years ago, he drew over 10,000 Believe-It-or-Not Cartoons, and the search for the incredible became the absorbing interest of his life. In that search, he traveled in 198 countries on his mission — the mission of proving that truth is stranger than fiction.

BELIEVE IT OR NOT!



APPLE DOLLS

The heads of these unique character dolls are made of Dried Apples.



SCOLD'S BRIDAL

Fastens over the head of a nagging woman to keep her quiet.

(Colonial Times)

CURIOSITIES

Ripley's *Believe It or Not!*

MUSEUM

**WONDERS
OF THE WORLD**

WORLD RIGHTS RIPLEY "BELIEVE IT OR NOT" EXHIBITIONS
JOHN ARTHUR EXHIBITIONS, INC., EMPIRE STATE BLDG., NEW YORK, N. Y.

ODDITIES

ST. AUGUSTINE, FLORIDA

