

AS BROADCAST
RUTHRAUFF & RYAN Inc. ADVERTISING

RADIO DIVISION

AMERICAN C. & C. COMPANY
PALL MALL

BROADCAST: REV. #53

DATE: WED. 3/29/44

GRAM: BELIEVE IT OR NOT
ROBERT L. RIPLEY

NETWORK: 9:15-9:30 P. M.
MUTUAL
E. W. T.

(SIGNATURE - ENDING WITH "HUNTING SONG")

PELL MELL Famous Cigarettes, the cigarette of
Modern Design, presents the man whose whole life
is a constant hunt for facts....

BELIEVE IT OR NOT -- BOB RIPLEY!

(APPLAUSE)

(THEME: - "A HUNTING")

(NEWS SPOT TO FOLLOW)

ROBERT L. RIPLEY - BELIEVE IT OR NOT - MARCH 29, 1944

Greetings everyone and welcome. Tonight, Gabriel Heatter, in his brilliant news commentary mentioned that the Russian Armies have retaken Nikolayev, Russia's most important Sea Port on the Black Sea. Curiously, the name of the city means, "The City of the Victorious People" and it's well-named, as the "Victorious People" have just recaptured it only yesterday. Now, I know we're all having our troubles with food rationing, what with coupons, points, tokens, red stamps, blue stamps, brown stamps and so on. But in this city of Nikolayev, they solved this problem hundreds of years ago. When a famine afflicted the people, and there was starvation in the land--and there were many hungry mouths and little food, the elders decided on a system of rationing. Their's was a simple system. Everybody was to fast one day out of four. And although more than three hundred years have elapsed since that time, they still observe one fast day out of every four, or ninety fast days every year. I think the strangest monument in the world stands in front of the Museum in Nikolayev. It's a monument to a pair of trousers! Now that very useful male garment was first invented here by the Scythians--the first inhabitants of Nikolayev, and from here, trousers spread around the world, and ladies and gentlemen you remember this--that you would still be wearing a Roman toga, an Indian Blanket or a sarong, or maybe a bed sheet like Ghandi, if it were not for the people of Nikolayev...BELIEVE IT OR NOT!

(MUSIC)

Bob Ripley will be back in just a moment. (PAUSE)
Smokers, it's easy to discover for yourself the
advantage PELL MELL'S Modern Design gives you. You see
the evidence. The minute you look at a PELL MELL you
see PELL MELL'S greater length. That's Modern Design.
And when you light your cigarette, you can see that
PELL MELL'S greater length travels the smoke further -
over a twenty per cent longer route of PELL MELL'S
traditionally fine tobaccos. PELL MELL'S greater
length filters the smoke naturally - diminishes heat
and bite on the way - gives you a cooler, smoother,
better-tasting smoke. Ladies and gentlemen, believe the
evidence of your own eyes. PELL MELL gives you
visible proof of its advantage to smokers. Your eye
tells why. PELL MELL'S Modern Design filters the smoke
gives it that cooler, smoother taste.

(SCENE SETTER - FADE FOR)

AND HERE HE IS AGAIN --- BOB RIPLEY!

In my travels throughout the world ~~in my endless hunt~~
~~for facts~~ I have visited India many times ^{or five ^{times} to be exact}. And it was
in India that I found this true life drama ~~that for its~~
strange and exotic observance of Indian customs, ~~and in~~
the story of its happy ending, proves ^{again} the age old story
that love always finds a way.

(SNEAKS)

The time - the year 1885. The place, the town of Kolar, in the province of Mysore, India. Rajendra, an Indian youth in his early twenties, has just returned from an absence of many years, during which time he ^{had} travelled all over the world. He has made many unsuccessful attempts to see his young and beautiful sweetheart ~~to~~ ^{but} ~~whom he was engaged before he left India.~~ The curious Indian customs make it impossible for a young man to see a young lady alone unless all the formalities of ~~the~~ customs are adhered to. The girl, Sira Rayal ~~is just~~ ^{is} ~~nineteen,~~ but a girl of rare and exotic oriental charm. As our scene opens Rajendra has finally won an audience with his sweetheart, Sira.

(UP AND OUT)

RA: Sira Rayal. In the five years since I have been away you have grown even more beautiful.

SA: You flatter me, Rajendra.

RA: When I left you, Sira Rayal, we were practically engaged to be married.

(REPROACHFULLY) But you went away.

SA: True. I was ambitious and went into the Western World to make my fortune.

And did you, Rajendra?

Ah, no...no..

~~Alas, the fortune have been unkind.~~ Fortune eluded me.

But I have returned to claim the most priceless treasure of them all. ^{You!} ~~Surely Fate cannot cheat me of that.~~

Rajendra, those words would have been happy to my ears a year ago.

(SURPRISED) A year ago? But why not now?

RAJENDRA: Too late?
You are too late. [^] I am now ~~a married woman~~, Rajendra,

~~Sire, you are jesting with me. Quickly, the truth.~~

~~That is the truth.~~

~~You have no husband. Else I should not have been able
to see you like this.~~

~~Do not hate me for what I did, Rajendra. I didn't know
that you would come back.~~ You have been in the Western

World so long that you have forgotten our customs.

Last year suitors bespoke the hands of my two younger
sisters, Gauda and Gaia. According to the Dravidian
customs of our family, my younger sisters could never
marry, if the older sister were unmarried. And so I
married!

RAJ: But Sire, whom did you marry?

I know you'll smile when you hear who my husband is.

I married - a tree.

RAJ: You married a tree?

Yes. Don't you remember that ~~it~~ ^{some} is the custom of our
country, in such cases to marry ~~an inanimate object~~.

I consented to ~~this interview with you~~ ^{see} only to tell
you that - I married ~~the sacred Banyan tree which grows~~

~~on the hill outside of Kolar.~~

Sira!

~~Beh! You will get a divorce. This is preposterous.~~

I am sorry, ~~but the marriage is not dissoluble.~~ I
shall remain to the end of my life a married woman
without a husband.

RAJ: I will not give you up. I will not let a tree stand
in the way of our happiness.

~~There is nothing you can do about it.~~

~~I'll see about that.~~

~~No, Rajendra. Now we must say goodbye, forever. Please
make no further attempt to see me.~~

(BRIDGE)

The dejected suitor went away heartbroken. It was impossible for him to realize that the girl he loved was actually married to - a tree. He made up his mind to do something about it. That night, with his friend Taluk, Rajendra went to the hill outside of Kolar and found the sacred Banyan tree.

(FOOTSTEPS)

Ah, the moon is bright. See ^{over} - there is the sacred Banyan!

Rajendra, do you think this is right? We might bring down the wrath of our people if we desecrate the tree.

Desecrate nothing, we will chop it down.

~~Perhaps you're right.~~

Look at it. A tree. Yet it is the husband of the girl I love. ^{Come, Taluk, chop!} ~~Here quick - give me the axe.~~

(CHOP OF AXE AGAINST TREE)

~~Rajendra, you are chopping far too slowly.~~

(REGULAR CHOPPING NOW: SUSTAIN)

~~(GRITTED TEETH, BREATHING) This is the husband of the girl I love. Come Taluk... chop.~~

~~All right.~~

(REDOUBLE CHOPPING)

We will find out whether it will be - goodbye forever.

~~ounds,~~ Rajendra. You are chopping like a madman.

I am chopping with my heart. I am chopping down the one thing in the world that stands between me and my happiness.

~~Easily, there. A chip flew off your axe and almost blinded me.~~

A moment now - and this tree will fall.

(CHOPPING UP AND CROSS FADE TO: CRASH OF TREE SPLITTING AND FALLING) (CAST: LOOK OUT! LOOK OUT!)

(BREATHING HARD) There now! It took little enough time for that.

~~Now we shall go back to Kolar. I am tired from this work.~~ And - *Rajendra - I fear we did a great wrong to touch the sacred Banyan.

It was no sacred Banyan to me. It was the husband of the girl I loved. Now, she is free to marry me.

~~Aye. You have certainly accomplished that.~~

~~Tomorrow I shall go to her and tell her.~~

(AXE DROPS)

You dropped your axe, Rajendra.

I know.
I know. I'll pick it up. (BENDS OVER: OFF: SLIGHTLY:)

Merciful heavens... Taluk. Look...

Huh?

~~What did you pick up?~~

When the sacred Banyan fell, it dug the earth up. And look.

Those shiny pebbles?

~~It is good there is such a bright moon.~~ These are not shiny pebbles.

No? Then - what are they?

This is gold, Taluk. Gold nuggets. ~~In my travels~~
I have never seen the like - Taluk..it's gold! We're
rich! ~~We're~~ rich!

(PLAY OFF)

And Rajendra was right. The ^{nuggets} ~~pebbles~~ were gold nuggets.
The pebbles were gold nuggets, ladies and gentlemen,
and on that spot they discovered the famous Champion
Lode of Kolar, the greatest gold producing mine in
all India. This mine has produced four hundred
million dollars in gold since then. And all because
Rajendra, an Indian youth, chopped down the sacred
Banyan - the tree ^{his sweetheart} ~~the girl he loved~~ had married,
because of the custom of her people. And needless to
say, the young couple Rajendra and Sira were married,
and lived happily ever afterward.....

BELIEVE IT OR NOT!

(APPLAUSE)

(PLAY OFF)

Now here's Don Hancock with a message from our
Government.

friends, let's all be even more careful in CONSERVING RUBBER. America's Synthetic Rubber Program has made great strides. A network of synthetic rubber plants is now in operation. However, military needs are far heavier than anticipated. Huge airplane and combat vehicle tires.....bullet-sealing gas tanks and life rafts ... continue to require a great percentage of the new rubber. And what it adds up to friends, is this: Our help is needed to "stretch" America's vital rubber supply. So let's all drive our cars only when necessary stay under thirty-five miles per hour ... keep tires inflated and inspected regularly. And most important, let's be sure to have our tires RECAPPED as soon as the tread has worn off. Let us conserve our tires... and keep our car on war duty!

("ALL FOR ONE" - FADE FOR)

All for one and one for all. Yes, that's the way we're going to win the war. Over there, all together fighting for Victory. Over here, all together working for Victory - the Victory symbolized by the letter "V" - the same letter "V" you see on every package of your PELL MELL Cigarettes!

(UP FULL AND OUT)

And here are Bob Ripley's answers to the V-Mail letters from our boys in the service.

OK shoot!
~~All right. Don't fire away.~~

Well Bob
Our first letter comes from Lieutenant George Anderson, U.S. Navy who says English policemen are called constables. He writes, "I went up to one of these men and asked him why he was called a constable. He said he didn't know. I told him I'd write you and find out for him".

All right,
Well, Lieutenant Anderson you can tell your policeman friend ^{not to worry} that the word "constable" originally meant "Commander-in-Chief" of the Army. But as time went on, the word kept ^{changing} ~~decreasing in importance~~ until today it means ~~just~~ a village policeman! BELIEVE IT OR NOT!

~~Private Hugh Foster writes: "We got into a real argument here the other day about the exact location of the South of Dixie. Just where is Dixie?"~~

Well, Private Foster, the original "Dixie" isn't in the South at all. It is on Long Island, New York. A farmer named Dixie used to live there in the days before the War Between the States, and he used to give employment to runaway slaves. He treated them very well and they all remembered him ever afterwards and would speak of the time when they "were in Dixieland". And it is from their old expression that the word "Dixie" has come down to us!

~~BELIEVE IT OR NOT!~~

Yoeman Bruce Leonard, U. S. Navy whose pal has just been married wants to know how the custom of throwing old shoes at weddings originated.

Yes...

you see

Well, Yoeman Leonard, in the olden days, marriage contracts were sealed by the exchange of shoes between the families of the bride and groom. That made it legal. And at weddings, parents would signify that their daughters had been given to her husband by throwing their shoes after the bride. And that's how it began!

~~And the custom still exists to this day!~~ BELIEVE IT OR NOT!

Bob -- on with the hunt! Here's Bob Ripley with the answer to last night's Believe It Or Not. Remember, Bob, you asked -- "Where is there a vase so valuable that for the last 100 years, it has had a special watchman guarding it night and day?"

Yes, Don. That is the famous "Portland Vase", in the Gold Room of the British Museum in London. It's the most valuable vase in the world, dating from the first century -- and is priceless because it is the most celebrated example of the Egyptian glassworkers' art. It was found in 1550 in a Roman tomb and was eventually bought by the Duke of Portland. That's where it gets its name.

And to give you an idea of its value -- in the olden days, a vase of this quality could not be bought with money! It would usually be exchanged for 30,000 slaves, or a province, and at one time the country of Sicily was traded for a vase.

But in 1840, a lunatic entered the British museum and smashed this vase into hundreds of pieces. However, it was so artfully reconstructed that it appears perfect today. But ever since that time -- a special watchman has been assigned to guard it night and day and this has been done for the past 100 years. BELIEVE IT OR NOT...IT'S TRUE!

Well, Bob, what's your brainy blockbuster for tonight?

Well, Don, here it is...What king, living today, and one of our allies, has married 200 wives.

Oh, Bob. You mean there's a King alive today who married 200 wives? I thought there was a law agin that.

Well, you see a King could do no wrong. But he did marry 200 wives and tomorrow night I'll tell you who he is! BELIEVE IT OR NOT!

Smokers, whenever you buy cigarettes, remember - PELL MELL'S Modern Design gives you two important benefits. First, PELL MELL'S greater length travels the smoke further, diminishes heat and bite on the way. Second, PELL MELL'S greater length filters the smoke, gives it that cooler, smoother taste. That's why wherever particular people congregate, you see PELL MELL - in the smart red package.

(THEME - "A HUNTING" - FADE FOR)

This is Don Hancock reminding you to listen in tomorrow night when PELL MELL Famous Cigarettes, the cigarette of Modern Design, will again present. BELIEVE IT OR NOT -- BOB RIPLEY!

(APPLAUSE FULL)

(THEME - "A HUNTING" - FULL UP TO CUE)

THIS IS MUTUAL.