

Lenten Guideposts

Personal Messages of Inspiration and Faith

Edited by Norman Vincent Peale

25. SINGING SAM, THE HAPPY BUS DRIVER

By Chase Walker
The legend of Sammy, who sings to his bus passengers, greets scowls with a smile and serves as a sight-seeing guide along his run, has spread not only through New York City, but throughout the whole country.

Sammy Casavilla wheeled his eighth avenue bus up to the 42nd Street stop. The air brakes wheezed, the door flew open and Sammy turned to his passengers.

"Ladies first," he shouted cheerfully. "This is 42nd Street . . . the Franklin Savings Bank, Times Square, the movie center. Change for Grand Central. The correct time is 11:02."

Sammy's first name is really Salvatore, but along his run from 155th Street to Abington Square he is known as Singing Sam, the happy bus driver.

The legend of Sammy has been growing through New York City the past few years. The Eighth Avenue Coach Corp. receives a steady stream of complimentary letters about him. One described him as "the finest chauffeur in the United States." Another wrote: "The way he puts everybody in a good humor is a revelation."

He Sings

Sam's route north begins at Abington Square. As he wheels the heavy coach through traffic he sings "I love you, I love you, la-da-da-da," to a tune that he admits is his own. At West 18th Street he stops for a traffic light and shouts to a fruit dealer.

"How's your sister-in-law?" "Fine, Sammy, how are you?" "Wonderful," Sammy warbles. The fruit dealer hands him a pear. Sammy holds it up for his passengers to see. At 66th Street he gives it to a cop.

At brief intervals Sammy announces the correct time. At Columbus Circle he always notes the temperature and weather information on an advertising sign and makes an appropriate announcement. By this time the atmosphere inside the bus resembles an Elk outing.

Cheerfulness and courtesy are the rules aboard Sammy's bus. Regardless of age, all passengers are addressed as "young lady" or "young gentleman." "They are all wonderful," he adds. Wonderful is one of Sammy's favourite words. He puts the stress on the "won."

Gives Service

Personal service features Sam's relations with his riders. A typical incident occurred several years ago. It was a rainy night. Two ladies carrying luggage were standing on the corner of 19th Street and Eighth Avenue, vainly trying to flag a taxi. A bus pulled up in front of them and the doors popped open.

"Climb aboard, young ladies." The cheery voice was Sammy's. The two ladies shook their heads. "We're waiting for a cab," they answered.

Sam was not this easily shaken off. "Going to Penn Station, aren't you?" They nodded. Sammy then jumped out in the rain, picked up their bags and herded them on the coach with breezy chatter. "We'll give you better service than a cab," he promised.

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Dodd's Kidney Pills

by Clifford McBride



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At Penn Station he pulled up directly in front of the station, helped them off with their luggage, then whistled for a red cap. One of the grateful women reached in her bag for a tip.

Sam shook his head. "No, thank you, young lady. It is a service of the company. Glad to have been of help."

"Truly a Christian." Why does he do it? "I don't think it is hard work," he says. "My day flies. You should see those people cheer up. Even the grouchy ones are smiling when they get off. We all have plenty of troubles, but they should be left where they belong."

One of the letters written to the bus company about Sammy was an especially strong tribute. "That man is truly a Christian," it read, "and a fine dispenser of Christ's teachings . . . kind and courteous . . . a credit to mankind and civilization . . . my conception of what we should be to make the world a better place to live in."

Quite remarkable that a short bus ride could inspire such an eulogy. Obviously there was a deep-rooted faith, a remarkable philosophy bound up in Sammy. What was the story of his life? Before starting his afternoon run, Sammy sat down in his empty bus and talked about himself.

A Dream Come True

"I came over from Italy in 1925," he began. "It was my life-long dream come true. Two years later I got a job running the trolley. I loved the work, but knew very little English when I started. People on my car were always asking questions and I always answered 'Yes.' It was the only word I knew, so it had to do for everything."

Sammy smiled ruefully as he recalled these early experiences. "People would get mad at me for giving them wrong answers, so I had to learn English quick. I only wanted to make people feel good."

"I met my wife, Josephine, on my Broadway trolley," he remembered with a far-away smile. "Her folks were regular riders. One night they asked me to go to 'Aida.' That did it."

A slight shadow crossed his face. "Five years ago I had great troubles come into my life. My wife had a bad cough so I take her to a doctor. He X-rayed her lungs. What a terrible thing she had! Very bad spot on both lungs."

"The doctor said she could not get well. I did not lose faith though. I couldn't. Finally, one doctor told me to send her to a place where the air was clean and fresh. It was the only hope. I had very little money, but the bus company said I could work double shifts."

Easy to be Grouchy

"I fixed my wife with room at Lake Saranac, and started to drive bus day and night to pay for it. Then I learn something. When people have much trouble it is easy to be grouchy and hard to be cheerful. I wish to forget my trouble while driving my bus, so I try to smile and talk a lot. Pretty soon I find it is easy to be cheerful."

"I go to Catholic Church every Sunday morning and pray for my Josephine. I never lose faith any time. On my bus route I learn all the churches—Catholic, Jewish and Protestant. Then I call them off to my passengers. People should know more about churches."

"My wife was away for two years. The doctor . . . he rides on my bus, you know . . . he operated on her and it was a fine success. Now she is home and well."

As Sammy prepared to wheel his bus into traffic, his teeth flashed in a wide smile. "God has been very good to me. This is a wonderful world."

TOMORROW: Most people probably never think of any connection between religion and sports. Yet faith works on the football field, just the same as in other places. Tex Coulter, star professional lineman, tells how.

(From the magazine "Guideposts" and the book of the same name Copyright 1950 by Guideposts Associates Inc., Pawling, New York).

P. E. I. Odds And Ends

(Continued from Page 5)

redients, to brew the best possible beer at an honest price.

"I consider it a food and that we are making an honest contribution to the commercial life of Great Britain."

The conversation as quoted is not of course a verbatim report, but is true in essence.

There are many definitions of a Sportsman. The genuine product is not a cultivated growth entirely, he must have certain built-in characteristics as a sort of nucleus from which and around which the complete sportsman personality matures.

In the broader and better sense of the term, and this has nothing to do with discarded theories of superior breeding, he must be a gentleman.

Charlottetown has had some fine examples of the species in the past, and has some excellent candidates for the honored title at the present time. Who more worthy of the designation for instance, than Johnny (Snag) Squarebriggs, an enthusiastic curler, a lover of golf, and not so many years ago, one of the most durable and honest hockey players, the Province ever had performing in American and Canadian hockey cities. It is not Johnny's connection with any of these sports in itself, which warrants his being called "Sportsman".

He played hockey with Baltimore, with New York, Hershey, with Sydney, with Charlottetown, and was liked and respected everywhere he performed. He was not a super-star, but he was a great competitor.

Whether playing for his home town or some American club, he "filled the unforgiving minute with sixty seconds worth of distance run." Everything he had in skating ability, stickhandling, endurance and know-how, he threw into every game. The more questionable tricks of the pastime, which bring penalties, were foreign to his code. His sense of decency compelled him to play strictly according to the rule book, and squabbling with referees was a taboo with him.

While never a flashing star, he was a great team man, always one of his clubs most valuable assets, no matter where he played. His straightforward personality, his love of the game, his loyalty to his team gave his teammates confidence which hockey ability alone could not give. Some players rise to the heights occasionally, Johnny always turned in the one type of game, his best.

Johnny is a curler now, and he propels a stone with the same absorption, and will-to-win that he gave to hockey. But he has not lost his outstanding characteristics of being able to win modestly, and to lose with a chuckle. Few people who know him would deny him the classification which he himself would be the last to claim, "Sportsman."

When freedom is threatened, the outcome as to whether it is to be preserved, may be decided in Asia, Europe or the North American Continent. Our chief concern should be that it is preserved, and that we do something about preserving it, no matter where the struggle takes place. It is still true as Lincoln said "that no country

can long remain half slave and half free." It is necessary to charge the phrasing of course to "The world cannot long remain half slave and half free."

PREMIER PROPOSES

(Continued from Page 5)

ings might require an investment of some \$30,000, with an additional \$10,000 or \$12,000 for fertilizer and \$2,000 for lime.

For a farm of this kind the Premier would recommend a self-propelled harvester costing \$2,000 or \$3,000, also half a dozen silos to provide abundant grass silage, also three or four wagons and other equipment at a total cost for machinery of \$25,000.

Office accommodation, manager's salary and other extras would run into another \$10,000.

During the first year it would be necessary to have about \$30,000 in running capital, involving a total investment of over \$150,000.

In stocking the proposed farm the Premier figured the requirement would be for 300 sheep, at about \$10,000; forty sows, about \$2,500; a herd of about fifty dairy cattle, at about \$20,000; also poultry, horses, etc.

In the first year about \$25,000 in feed would require to be purchased, as well as between \$2,000 and \$3,000 for gas and oil, and perhaps \$2,000 for electricity, although—the Premier added—it might be cheaper to erect wind-chargers and thus evade payment of high electrical costs.

For annual repairs he estimated another \$2,000 or \$3,000 and for veterinary services \$1,000.

On a large farm of this kind employees' children might be grouped into a school area of their own. Nursing and medical assistance could be provided cheaper and even sports programmes could be worked out.

Lobsters and smelts could be fished during the proper seasons if the farm was located near the shore.

Calculating the whole operation the Premier suggested that the farm could produce about \$100,000 of revenue annually.

"If you had a thousand farms of a thousand acres operated in this manner on the Island, each producing goods worth \$100,000, that would mean \$100,000,000 of revenue," he said. Statistics show that we are only producing \$22,000,000. The big farms should maintain a population of about 100,000 people, giving, the Province a total population of some 150,000 including the small farms and municipalities.

"I am just arguing this point and suggesting that it might be taken up as a subject for debate," the Premier said. "The idea is that if you built up this kind of life in the country you would have better farmers, producing more of the stuff that we have to sell, and benefiting a lot of people in our towns and city as well."

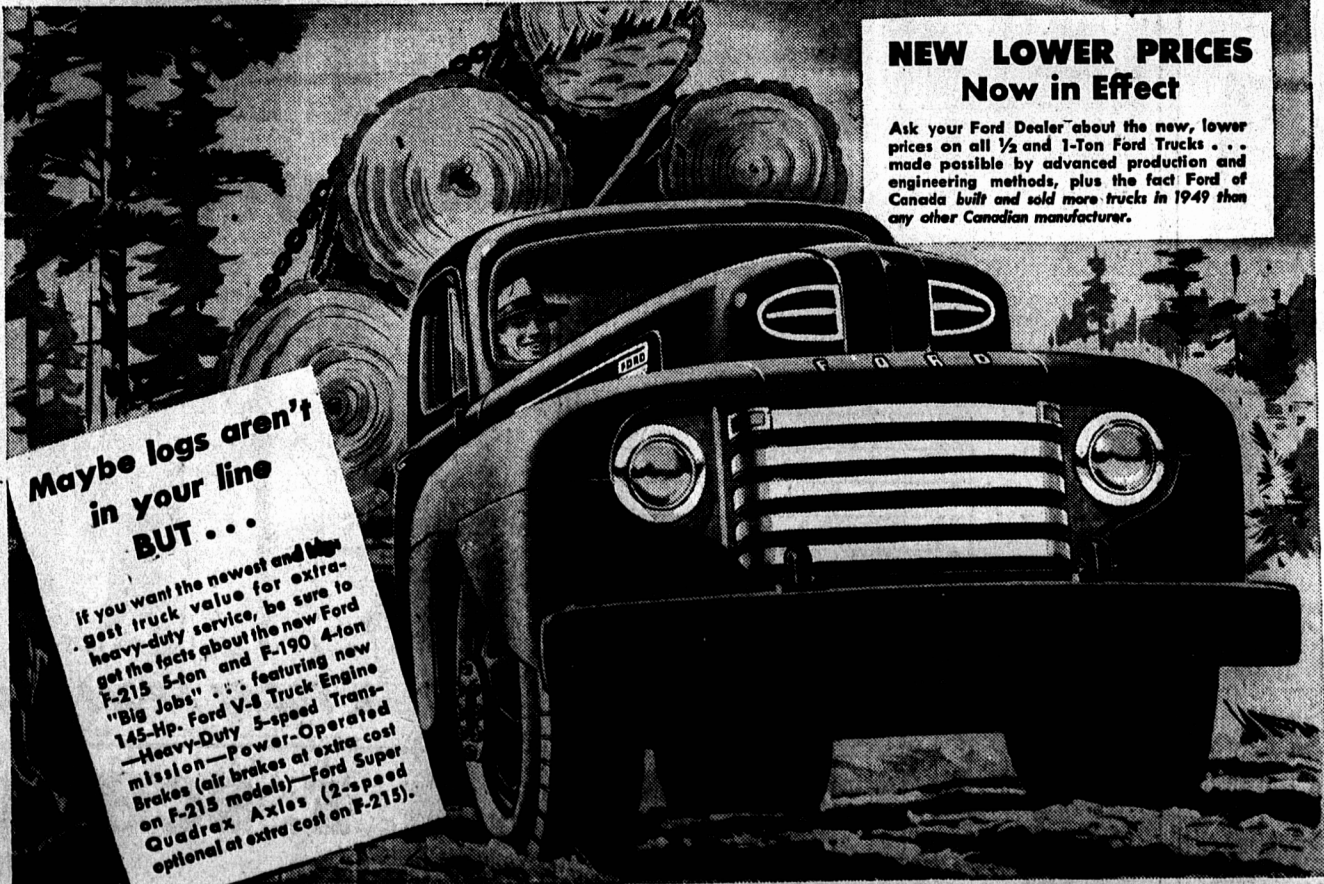
Guests at yesterday's luncheon

Included Messrs. Homer Nicholson, T. D. DeBlais, Robert DeBlais, A. Likely, E. M. Robinson, A. W. Wellner, Dr. L. W. Shaw, Mayor B. Earle MacDonald, Hon. H. H. Cox, Hon. W. E. Darby, J. W. Abbott, Ottawa, W. M. MacDonald, Sydney, A. R. Lendl, Switzerland, Rev. H. E. D. Ashford, Frank Walker.

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