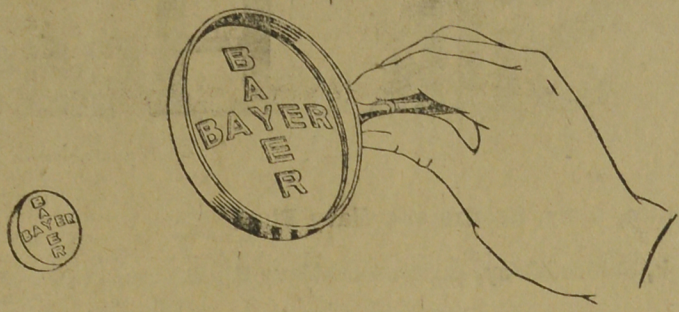


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SAYS HE CAN CONVERSE WITH HENS AND CHICKENS

Buffalo Man Has Discovered That They Have a Language—Consists of Only a Few Sounds, But it Took Him Years to Master it—Travels With Poultry on Long Trips in a Box Car and Gets Intimately Acquainted.

(Buffalo News)

When the late Professor Garner, widely known scientist, created a storm of criticism by his statement that he had mastered the language of apes and could jabber monkey talk understandingly with the simian ring-tailed inhabitants of the jungle, there were those who were skeptical. At that, there was nothing unreasonable in the statement of Professor Garner viewed in the light of the claim by J. F. Herring, 919 East Eighth Street, Oklahoma City, Okla., who was in Buffalo today and declared to a reporter for the News that he could converse with hens and chickens.

Now gentle reader, don't smile. Mr. Herring was serious and he wasn't referring to the "gimme" language of the chickens on Broadway either. He

was referring to chickens which wear their feathers where they belong and not on their hats. And by hens, he was not referring to the chickens of the hat wearing type advanced to mature years.

Fact of the matter is, Mr. Herring travels between Guthrie, Oklahoma, and New York on the latest type of poultry cars for long distance shipping. A description of one of the cars was published in the News two or three months ago.

"There is no longer any question that birds, especially those in the poultry class, have a language," said Mr. Herring today. "Not only have they a language but I have been able to master parts of it so that I can make myself understood, by imitating the various sounds I have heard them

use one to another, under different circumstances. All this has, of course taken years of study but it has always had a fascination for me and I have been associated with poultry and its habits from boyhood."

On his trips east, Mr. Herring is alone with some 5000 hens, roosters and chickens, shut up in the solitude of the special "chicken Pullman" for days at a time. He is all they have to look to for food and care and naturally they grow to trust him. They even lay eggs for him. In turn he is nice to them in every possible way sees that the temperature is kept just right, uses as much care in feeding as would a mother with her flock of children and in general there is established a relation such as few men attain with members of the poultry family.

As a perquisite of the job, men in charge of the poultry cars are allowed all the eggs laid by the hens and pullets en route. Perhaps you may think Mr. Herring has a selfish motive in learning the chicken language and in pampering his feathered pets. It is true that he is amply rewarded with eggs but naturally he loves chickens and they would get the same care and attention anyway.

You may scoff at the idea that his care and his little chats with them over their breakfasts or on lonely afternoons as the long train speeds eastward result in more eggs. Scoff if you like but he cannot be blamed if he urges them to lay, as long as he is able to explain to them the financial benefits to himself by their doing so.

"Chickens vary just like people," said Mr. Herring. "Now and then I will get a car full of poultry that are stand-offish—either ignorant or snobbish—one is as bad as another. Others have bad dispositions just like folks. However, haven't you ever noticed when on a long trip by train you would sometimes find yourself with a congenial crowd and get acquainted with a lot of good people? Well, it is the same with a trainload of chickens."

"Often I have had a passenger list of hens and pullets with whom I have gotten on good terms and with whom I could converse even in a limited way. Of course it is hard with our limited conversation to explain the high cost of living and such things in all detail to show them that I need the eggs. However by being good to them I have often reaped a reward of as many as 300 dozen of eggs on one trip, from the approximately 5000 fowls in the car. With egg prices where they have been this winter, you can readily see that that is very fine for me."

"It is a fact," continued Mr. Herring, "that when some creature comes around when the car is standing on a siding at night, I am able to tell from the voices of the fowls whether it is a man or a dog. Maybe that sounds incredible to you but I have tested it out often. They have a different expression of fright for each when disturbed."

"They often tell me when there is something they don't like about their meals or when the temperature in the car falls. I always try to remedy such cases and thereby keep on good terms with my charges and so reap a good harvest of eggs as well as win their regard and friendship from a social standpoint."

Mr. Herring states that it took him years to master the first words of fowl language but that after he had gotten a foothold, more of it came easier until now he is never lonely on the trips. Various fowls, such as ducks, geese, etc., have entirely different languages, he says, while different breeds of hens have the same language, but their accents and tones may differ, some coarser or finer—shriller or more dulcet as the case may be, than others. The guinea fowl has an entirely different language and one much more difficult to master even the rudiments. He says they were originally wild fowl and harder to understand than purely domestic fowls.

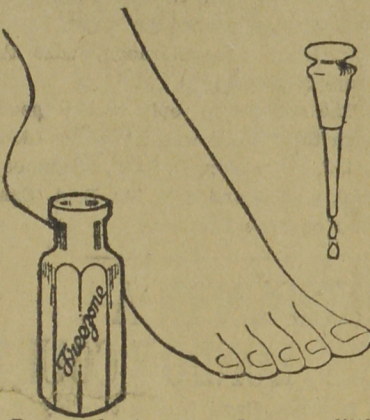
"All the wild birds have a language also," he said. "I personally knew a cow puncher in Texas who could call entire flocks of quail to him in the fields. I have been with him and seen him do it. When the quail came up to him, they would flap their wings, spread them out and wander about trying to find the quail which was talking to them, so well had he mastered the language. They did not realize that it was the man who was talking and walked about over his feet trying to find the bird which had called them."

It was suggested to Mr. Herring that he should be able to connect up a fine salary with some big hen ranch where he could talk to the hens and thus increase their output of eggs in this way, he was urged, he could help bring down the high cost of living.

"I have thought of all that," said Mr. Herring, "and maybe some day I'll try it. My neighbors have sometimes coaxed me to try it on their fowls but, you see, I do not have time enough with a strange flock like that to get sufficiently friendly to warrant them going out of their way to grant me favors. It is on the long trips east when we get thoroughly acquainted,

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that the fowls get really friendly and willing to co-operate in raising my financial standing."

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Forty-One Years at the Throttle

Forty-one years of continuous service as a locomotive engineer without one accident to mar his work is the remarkable record established by Mr. Lew Patrick of Kerrisdale, formerly of Revelstoke, B. C., and previous to October 31, 1919, an engineer operating trains out of Revelstoke on the mountain division of the Canadian Pacific Railway main line.

Mr. Patrick's record is one that it will be hard to duplicate. He is a man still hale and hearty and in full enjoyment of his strength and faculties but has decided to take a rest from the long strain of his railroad duties.

MR. LEW PATRICK.

He is one of the pioneers who came west with the railroad and developed it as it developed. Starting with the Canadian Pacific at St. Boniface Manitoba, when a young man of twenty-five years of age he passed successively through the occupations of brakeman, conductor, fireman, and engineer during the first year of his service. His first engine was one of the old, wood-burner type and he has seen railway motive power develop from that stage through coal burners of various grades to the latest type of oil-burning mogul. As engine developed Mr. Patrick kept pace and operated them as fast as the came.

He was working on construction trains in British Columbia, and was present at the summit when Lord Strathcona drove the last spike that linked the Atlantic with the Pacific ocean. Since the Mr. Patrick has been driving engines on the mountain sections. From June, 1896 to the spring of 1918 he was driver on the fast Imperial limited passenger train. On those alone he has carried tens of thousands of passengers in safety. Perhaps no one man in the service of the great railway company has carried more people than he has. Long before he retired from active service his reputation as the safest engineer of the whole country had spread abroad. People liked to know they were being drawn by Lew Patrick, because it meant that the chances of accident had been reduced to the minimum. Though the Canadian Pacific Railway Company points with pride to its own wonderful record in protecting the lives of its passengers, and its own reputation in this regard has always been very high among railroad men and the travelling public, it is known that Lew Patrick was at the throttle was added assurance to those who knew.

Mr. Patrick is an example of the splendid type developed by the railroad service. His duty to his company and his passengers was his governing influence. The Canadian Pacific Railway company through the whole gamut of officials and men, from president to the newest brakeman feels pride in the record of this veteran engineer.

Mr. Patrick was born in South Durham, 65 miles east of Montreal, 66 years ago. His parents were farmers and he followed the same occupation until he went west to railroad. He was married in 1896, and has three children, Miss Jean and Mr. John Patrick of Vancouver, and Mrs. R. Boyce of Calgary, Alberta. L. V. K.

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