

Dale Carnegie

5-Minute Biographies

Author of "How to Win Friends and Influence People."



H. G. WELLS

If H. G. Wells Hadn't Broken His Leg He Might Still be Clerk in a Drygoods Store

Sixty years ago, a group of boys were playing on the streets of a London suburb when an accident occurred. One of the bigger boys picked up a little chap called Bertie Wells and tossed him high into the air; but instead of catching Bertie when he came down, the big boy dropped him and broke his leg.

For months, Bertie lay writhing in bed with a heavy weight tied to his leg. But the bone didn't set properly. It had to be rebroken. It was a terrible experience. Little Bertie screamed in agony and terror.

That seemed like a tragedy then, but Bertie knows better now. Today he is one of the most famous authors in the world. You know him not as Bertie, but as Herbert George Wells, or H. G. Wells. You have probably read some of his books. He has written over 75 volumes; and he himself admits that that broken leg was perhaps the luckiest thing that ever happened to him. Why? Because it kept him confined to the house for a whole year. He devoured every book he could get, because there was nothing else he could do.

Today, H. G. Wells is one of the highest paid authors on earth. He has probably made a million dollars with his pen; yet he was brought up in pinching poverty.

Finally, the crockery shop failed. The family was desperate, so his mother had to take a job as a housekeeper on a big estate in Sussex. Naturally, she lived with the servants and H. G. Wells often went there to visit her. And it was there that he got his first peep into English literature and he got that peep from the servants' quarters.

The future author of "The Outline of History" started out in business life, at the age of 13 as a drygoods clerk. He had to get up at 5 o'clock every morning, build the fire, and sleep for 14 hours a day. It was drudgery and he despised it. At the end of one month, the boss fired him because he was untidy and slovenly and troublesome.

He finally got a job clerking in another drygoods store. He had to eat, so this time, he held out a bit longer. But when the floorwalker wasn't looking, he would sneak down into the cellar and read Herbert Spencer.

After two years, he could stand it no longer. So he got up one Sunday morning, and without waiting for breakfast, he tramped 15 miles on an empty stomach to find his mother. He was frantic. He pleaded with her. He wept. He swore that he would kill himself if he had to remain in the shop any longer.

Then he wrote a long, pathetic letter to his old school master. Wells told him he was miserable, heart-broken, that he no longer wanted to live.

And the school master, to his utter astonishment, wrote back, offering him a job as a teacher.

Presto! That was another turning point in his life.

A few years after he began teaching, disaster overtook him with the suddenness of an explosion. It happened in this way: He was playing football. In the heat and excitement of the game, he was knocked down, trampled on and almost killed. The doctors gave up all hope; and for months he lived in fear of imminent death. For 12 terrible years after that, he clung to life as a semi-invalid; and yet, during those years, he developed the

ability that was to make his name known throughout the civilized world.

For five years he wrote furiously. The books and articles and stories that he turned out were dull and amateurish. And he had the good sense to realize it. So he burned up almost everything he wrote.

Finally, in spite of being half an invalid, he got another job teaching. There was a pretty girl in the biology class. Her name was Catherine Robbins. Presently H. G. Wells found that he was far more interested in Catherine than in biology. She was frail and sickly. So was he. They wanted to grab all the happiness they could, at once. So they were married.

That was 40 years ago; and, instead of dying, Wells regained his strength, turned out to be a human dynamo of energy and has been grinding out two full-length books each year, books that have sent their reverberations around the world.

LITTLE BITS OF HUMOR



Mother: "When that boy threw stones at you, why didn't you come and tell me, instead of letting them bark at him?"

Willie: "Well, that's just the way it is. You tell me, how can I tell you?"

Lieutenant (inspecting the mess hall): "What's the menu?"

Mess Sergeant: "We have a thousand things to eat, sir."

Lieut: "What are they?"

Mess Sergeant: "Beans."

Little Sister: "Bobbie, quick! I've dropped my pie under the table. See that Rover doesn't eat it!"

Bobbie: "Don't worry, I have my foot on it!"

A little boy with a vivid imagination presented the following essay on geese:

"Geese is a low heavy-set bird which is mostly meat and feathers. His head sits on one side and he sits on the other. Geese can't sing much on account of dampness of the moistures. He ain't got no between-histoes and he's got a little balloon in his stomach to keep him from sinking. Some geese when they get big get curis on their tails and is called ganders. Ganders don't half to sit an' hatch, but just eat and loaf and go swimmin'. If I was a geese I'd rather be a gander."

Egyptian Guide: "And the stones I'm about to show you are covered with hieroglyphics."

American Tourist: "Oh, isn't that too bad. At home we're bothered with grasshoppers."

A: "I was shipwrecked once and had to live for a week on a can of sardines."

B: "You didn't have much room to move around, did you?"

BANANA IS ONE OF THE OLDEST FOODS

The banana is probably one of the oldest of human foods. Its origin is in doubt. Some authorities say it is native to India and China; others that Columbus found it growing in America. As known today the banana is the result of centuries of cultivation, notes a writer in the Cleveland Plain Dealer. Bananas were practically unknown in the United States until shortly before the Civil war. Prior to that those reaching American shores were regarded as curiosities. In 1834 some 43,000 bunches came into the United States.

Although there are hundreds of varieties of bananas now on the markets, the principal commercial one is the familiar yellow-skinned fruit which comes chiefly from Honduras. Red bananas do not find favor because of their strong flavor.

Few foods can compare with the banana from the standpoint of economy; their average price throughout the past year being but 5 cents a pound. For this small outlay the purchaser gets a good amount of vitamins A, B, C, D, and G; an alkaline forming food; those minerals that are necessary to health, and wrapped in a naturally sanitary package.

The fruit with small brown dots covering the greater portion of its surface is riper than the clear yellow banana.

They should never be kept in an ice box, as this ruins the flavor and prevents maturing. One of the best methods is to place them in a paper bag with a string tied tightly about the opening, and hang them in a moderately cool room.

Cigar Tastes Corrected by Proper Soil Treatment

The poor taste and aroma of some cigars can be corrected by proper soil treatment, according to the Connecticut agricultural experiment station.

"Experienced cigar smokers," said Dr. P. J. Anderson, of the tobacco substitution, "frequently correlate the taste with the appearance of the ash on the cigar. A dark muddy ash in most cases is associated with poor taste and aroma; while good cigars produce lighter colored ashes," reports the station.

The dark ash was found attributable to excess potash in proportion to other gases, causing incomplete combustion of the carbon, and the gaseous products thus obtained are not so pleasant to the smoker as those resulting from a substitution.

"Good Luck" Bird Misnamed Bird of good luck to many native tribes, the hammerkop has become an ill omen to people of Johannesburg, South Africa, who have goldfish ponds. Many ponds have been denuded of fish by the feathered fishermen. Haunting small creeks, they feed on frogs. Recently a Johannesburg resident put a frog pond near his pools of goldfish. Both frogs and goldfish began disappearing and soon all were gone. His experience has become the lot of many keepers of goldfish, but now that the hammerkop is fond of fish they do not know whether it will be worth while to restock ponds.

The hammerkop builds a nest six feet in diameter with only a small opening for exit and ingress, usually on a hidden rocky ledge.

Lighting Cures Boy It Silenced While herding pigs Peter Schott, a farmer's son, took shelter under a tree in Yugoslavia to escape a storm. Lightning struck the tree, according to a report received at Belgrade, and rendered the lad deaf and dumb. Three days later Peter again sought shelter under a tree. Lightning also struck that timber, hurling the boy to the ground. When he recovered he could speak and hear perfectly again.

Strange Claim Filed One of the oddest claims ever made against a public body in England was recently filed with the Public Assistance committee at Leicester. It was for \$50 expenses incurred for mourning by a family informed mistakenly that one of its members had died in a Leicester institution.

Feeding Trees. Apple trees which do not obtain sufficient nourishment through their roots are "forcibly fed" in England by means of glass tubes inserted into the trunks and through which a preparation containing phosphate of potash and other chemicals is introduced.

Surgery Relieves Worry A new form of brain surgery which in a few selected cases has given noteworthy relief to persons suffering from abnormal worry, apprehension, anxiety, sleeplessness and nervous tension was recently announced.

No Reason Apparent "What does your wife say when you get home late?" "I'm not married."

"Then why do you go home so late?" -Stray Stories Magazine.

He's No Centipede Absent-minded Man—I want a pair of socks. Clerk—What number? Absent-minded Man—Why-ah-two, of course!

Homespun Yarn

To avoid tears and trouble when extracting onion juice, sprinkle salt on the surface of the cut onion; then scrape the onion with a spoon to extract the juice.

The best way to help a child develop attractive manners and genuine courtesy is to set a good example.

Mashed sweet potatoes seasoned with powdered cinnamon or nutmeg are a favorite dish in some parts of the country.

When buying a coat, remember that fur trim is often worn off by the rubbing of handbags, belts, buckles, buttons, jewelry.

The winter short courses in poultry at Cornell begins November 3 and ends on February 10.

Uncle Ab says he is made happy by the sight of a tree he once planted in memory of a great and good man.

A man rushed out of a house, across the pavement, jumped high in the air, and fell in the gutter heavily.

A passer-by rushed to his assistance, lifted him up and said, "You did a very funny thing just then."

"Yes," replied the other, "I thought I'd left my bicycle outside."

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