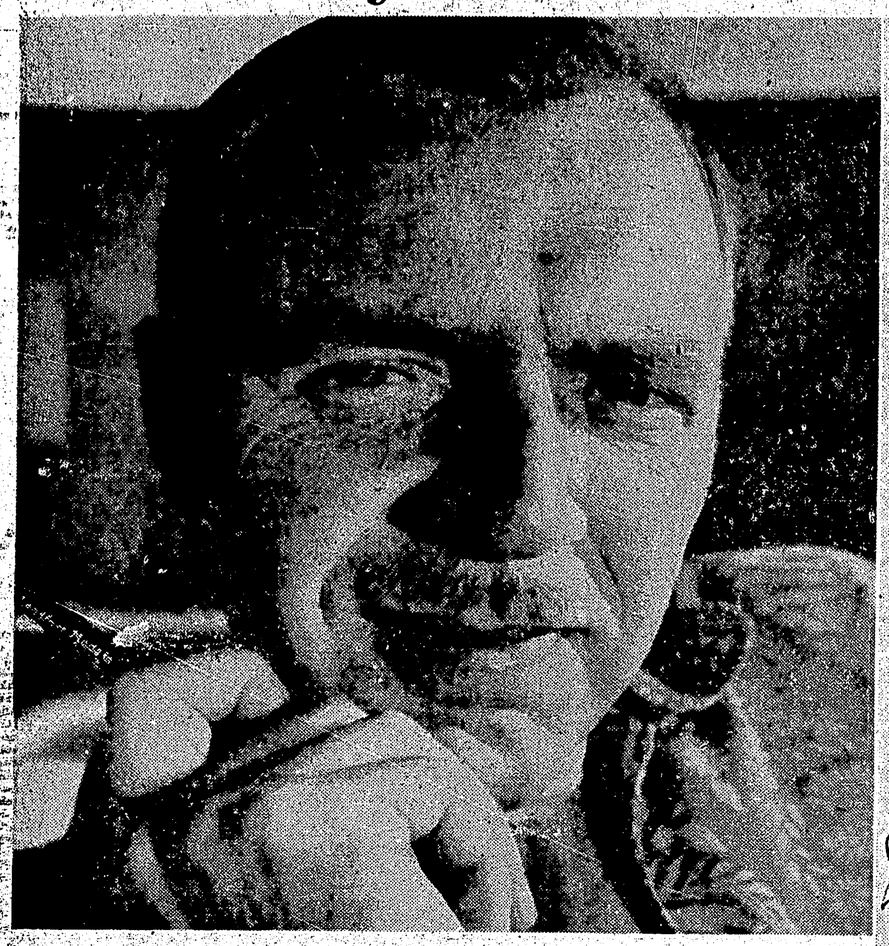
Len Norris, Cartoonist

Satire Softened with Whimsy

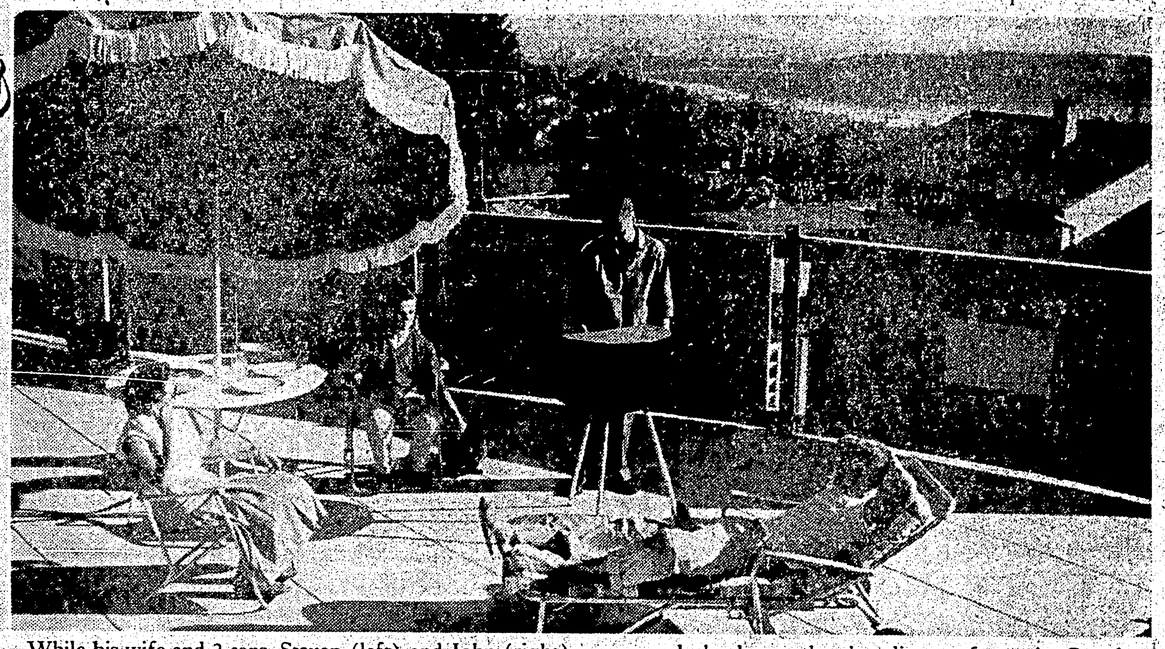


Len Norris is a mild-mannered, droll Canadian who regards the quirks and eccentricities of his fellow countrymen with an amused if disenchanted eye. For the past 20 years he has used his sharply satirical cartoonist's pen to poke good-humoured fun at the foibles of Canadians and to underline with a wit that may be barbed, but never vicious, some of the old world threads which run through contemporary Canadian culture. He was born in London, England in 1913, "within the sound of Bow Bells if the forecast was rain"; emigrated to Canada, settling in southern Ontario, when he was 12. Like most artists in the uncertain days of the '20s, he worked at a vast array of jobs from draftsman for the Port Arthur City Engineer to workman on Toronto's coal docks. During the war he served with Army Headquarters in Ottawa, created and edited an army manual, sweetening difficult technical information with a lavish sprinkling of zany cartoons. For his efforts Norris was later awarded an M.B.E. In 1950 he moved to the West Coast where he works for a large Vancouver newspaper. Norris avers he knows nothing about politics; refuses to turn out political cartoons. He prefers to depict the comical in the commonplace, with a born humorist's unillusioned eye for seeing the ridiculous in the sublime. In 1951 he was unanimously awarded the *National Newspaper Award in Cartooning*. Norris has created a wonderful world of waspish women, walrus-moustached men, and fiendish little children, in whom thousands of Canadians daily see, if not themselves, at least their friends and neighbours.

Although he is largely self-taught, Norris' drawings are greatly admired for their technical excellence.

Norris' talented right hand is insured for $125,000. Original drawings for his cartoons hang in the offices of public officials from Buckingham Palace to the Parliament Buildings in Victoria, B.C.

Norris insists he has no hobbies — except loafing. Above, he relaxes from his "five cartoons a week" contract on the balcony of his west Vancouver home, keeps a keen eye cocked on activities in the harbour which sprawls below.



While his wife and 2 sons, Steven (left) and John (right) admire his skill with a barbecue broiler, Norris rustles up some hamburgers for lunch. The family's pet Dachshund is a familiar figure in Norris' cartoons, which probably command the largest loyal audience of any in Canada. One enthusiast maintains that when Norris turns out a cartoon "even the borders look funny".

National Film Board of Canada Photos by Gar Lunney

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MOVIE COLUMN

With TV's leading undercover man

By BOB THOMAS

HOLLYWOOD (AP)—The way John Compton talks, you'd expect to find him in a western or maybe "the real McCoys." Here's how he describes how he came to Hollywood:

"Well, sir, I was out on a ridge in the moonlight with this purty girl down in Tennessee. She looks up at me and says, 'John yer handsome enough to be a movie star.' That was enough for me. The next day I told my mammy and pappy goodbye and started for Hollywood."

No cowpoke or hillbilly is Compton in the TV world. He plays the lead in The D.A.'s Man, NBC's new Saturday night crime show produced by Jack Webb. Compton is the wily undercover agent who adopts a variety of guises to ferret out criminals for a New York district attorney.

John tells a colorful story. Whether he's addicted to the tall tales of his Tennessee hill country near Lynchburg, it's anybody's guess. But some of the things he says appear to be true.

WORKED IN GAS STATIONS

He did come to Hollywood 15 years ago in search of the fortune which only now is materializing.

"One year I made only $25 from acting," he related. "How did I live? I worked in a gas station at night for $1.25 an hour."

He had a contract at Warner Brothers for a couple of years, then the film depression struck and he was back on the streets again. But he persisted and lately has been doing well in TV films. He tried out for The D.A.'s Man, but figured he didn't have a chance because he never could be mistaken for a New Yorker.

He figured without the instinct of Jack Webb. The producer saw some film on Compton, had a couple of chats with him and ordered him signed.

TOO YOUNG TO TRAVEL

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Actor Sterling Hayden will retain custody of his four children but he can't take them on a world cruise. The court's ruling Thursday said the actor's divorced wife, Betty Ann deNoon, is not a fit person to have custody. The court held they are too young to sail around the world in their father's 60-year-old yacht.

Radio CFPR

TUESDAY

PM
6:00—Supper Serenade
6:30—Book Review
6:40—Rawhide
6:55—Interlude
7:00—National News, Roundup
7:30—CFPR in Capsule
8:00—Drama in Sound
8:30—Anthology
9:00—Jazz Workshop
9:30—Leicester Square to Broadway
10:00—CBC News
10:15—Critics at Large
10:30—University of the Air
11:00—Local News
11:05—Recital
11:30—The Big Still
12:00—Sign off

WEDNESDAY

AM
6:40—B.C. Fishermen's B'cast
6:50—Interlude
6:55—Marine Weather
7:00—Interlude
7:05—CBC News
7:09—Dirct Report
7:15—1st Call to Breakfast
7:30—CBC News
7:35—2nd Call to Breakfast
7:45—Morning Devotions
7:55—Interlude
8:00—CBC News
8:10—Bill Good
8:15—3rd Call to Breakfast
8:30—News && Sharpe at 8:30
9:00—BBC News & Comty.
9:15—Little Concert
9:45—Miller Bay Special
9:50—Time Signal
10:00—Morning Visit
10:15—The Happy Gang
10:45—Woman in My House
11:00—One Man's Family
11:15—Odds 'n' Ends
11:30—Time for a Song
0:30—Music from the Movies

PM
12:00—Music of Other Lands
12:15—CBC News & Facts
12:25—Interlude
12:30—B.C. Farm Bost., Weather
12:55—Interlude
1:00—Rupert, Calling
2:00—Holiday Time
2:30—CBC News & Trans-Can. Mat.
3:30—Appointment with Agostini
4:00—Records for You
4:30—The Enchanted Hills
5:40—On the Scene
4:45—TBA
5:00—Around the Library
5:30—CBC News
5:45—Sports Desk
5:55—Byline

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PRINCE'S PORTRAIT—This is a recent portrait of Prince Philip who will visit Canada with Queen Elizabeth this summer in connection with the opening of the St. Lawrence Seaway. Before the Canadian visit, Prince Philip will make a round-the-world tour of India, Pakistan, Southeast Asia and the West Indies. This portrait was taken in London, England.
—CP photo from UKIO.

Reds planning 3-continent TV

PRAGUE (Reuters)—An Eastern counterpart to "Eurovision," Western Europe's television network, is being planned, and officials here claim it will link up three continents.

To be called "Olrvision," after O.I.R., the international radio and television organization, its sponsoring body, its headquarters will be in Prague.

Olrvision will distribute the same programs to 26 countries, though some of these are only republics within the Soviet Union. In addition to all the European members of the Communist bloc, the network will link Finland, the United Arab Republic and certain Asian states, which have begun to develop their own television.

TONE DIVORCED

EL PASO, Tex. (AP)—Franchot Tone, 52-year-old Broadway, film and television star, was divorced in a Mexican civil court Thursday by his 23-year-old wife, Dolores. Mrs. Tone charged "incompatibility of characters." The couple was married in Quebec in 1956.

Brando shook up

HOLLYWOOD (AP) — Actor-director Marlon Brando wanted realism in his jail-break movie scene. He got it.

Slim Pickens, who plays a deputy sheriff in the film One-Eyed Jacks, swung a rifle butt at the escaping Brando and connected. Brando suffered a deep gash over his right eye.

Brando's physician said the injury would not delay filming.

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