

## PROFESSION: PICTURE HUNTING

By JACQUES MARTIN

*As a rule, press photographers are not very popular, and many people feel annoyed every time a little plop and a dazzling flash interrupts their enjoyment of an interesting speech or a beautiful concert. On the other hand, the same people would not like to do without news photographs in their newspapers and magazines. So they will probably admit that press photographers must carry on their job. Here one of the photo hounds tells how this job is done. When one reads about their troubles and joys, their thrilling adventures and their despair at having been scooped by a competitor, one feels that they are human after all.—K.M.*

**E**DWARD VIII, King and Emperor, had abdicated to marry the woman he loved, and had thereby become for a few weeks the most publicized man in the world. While he was still making his farewell speech over the radio to his hundreds of millions of subjects, press photographers all over the Continent were already laying their plans. News agency reports revealed that the ex-King, for whose latest photograph British and American newspaper readers were waiting, had left for Boulogne immediately after his speech; but nothing was known about the final destination of the man who was now known as the Duke of Windsor.

As Boulogne is the starting point for an international express from the Channel coast to Austria, Viennese press photographers took the evening express for Boulogne. In Innsbruck they met the French express by which the Duke was traveling. He and his suite had a private car, while another car was filled with English and French cameramen pursuing him. The men from Vienna were immediately told that a kind of armistice had been agreed upon by the traveling photographers and the Duke's aide-de-camp. According to this, no attempt was to be made to photograph the Duke during the journey, in return for which the Duke promised to pose for the boys in Vienna. He kept his promise, but this was not the end of his worries.

Meanwhile it had become known that the Duke would travel by car to Enzes-

feld Castle, which belonged to Baron Rothschild and lay about sixty kilometers from Vienna. Soon the castle was besieged by photographers hoping to get some "human interest" shots of the Duke. One of the fellows scooped his colleagues by hiding himself for hours in some bushes behind the golf course and snapping the Duke at play, in spite of all the gendarmes guarding him. Another cameraman made photos of the castle from the air. In order to put an end to this siege, the Duke finally posed for two minutes in the court of the castle for sixteen picked photographers.

After that, sixteen cars raced to Vienna with the negatives in order to have the photos cabled to London and New York as quickly as possible. One of the men, who had a large Packard with a built-in darkroom, developed and copied his photos on the way, drove straight to the telephoto office, and was the first to cable his two photos. In order to complete his scoop, he blocked the telephoto line by having six ordinary snapshots, which he happened to be carrying on him, also cabled. His competitors, who arrived at the office only a few minutes after him, discovered that the next photos of the Duke could not be telegraphed until three and a half hours later, as only one picture at a time can be cabled and it takes about twenty-five minutes for every picture.

### LAUGHS AND SHUDDERS

However, the press photographer need not wait until a king abdicates or some

other historical event takes place. He can also make scoops in the case of less sensational happenings. One press photographer was notified by his New York photo service that at the world première of the movie "The Merry Widow," which was to take place in New York, the overture, played over the Vienna radio by the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra under the baton of the composer Lehár himself, would be relayed to New York. He took pictures of the orchestra and of Lehár while they were playing at the microphone, and dashed to the telephoto office with his wet copies. As a result, the people at the première could, on leaving the movie palace, already buy newspapers containing a photo of Lehár conducting the concert in Vienna which they had just heard.

On his eternal hunt for themes that he can illustrate, the press photographer often finds that the events of the day and instructions from his head office are not enough to satisfy his ambition. He creates his own opportunities for photographing, he arranges scenes like a producer, and he conjures up possibilities for photographing which would not exist but for his imagination and stage management. On a voyage to the Far East, a press photographer was struck by that bizarre dance known as the Lambeth Walk. Upon his arrival in China, he taught the necessary movements to a group of Chinese children and took a series of photographs which proved very successful in America, while in Germany it met with no praise. It corresponded more to the mentality of the American newspaper reader, who likes to see funny photographs.

It is especially the American photographer who is keen on catching his victim in a ridiculous pose. Only rarely does he show tact, as in the case of President Roosevelt's handicap of paralysis. He loves to snap famous singers at the instant when their mouths are widest open or to photograph a speaker when his movement may appear normal to the eye but looks funny when fixed in a photograph.

One of the chief banes to press photographers all over the world is the police. An experienced photographer has his own technique to get through police cordons. When his press card is not enough, he tries, for example, to attach himself to some personality being expected and thus to get to the center of interest. Or he dresses up as a fireman to get close to a big fire. If the police proves too difficult at one corner, he tries to get in at another. Of course, he knows that the precautionary measures taken by the police are not without justification, as it has been known for an assassin to have got close to a high personage in the guise of a photographer or journalist. Nevertheless, the press photographer usually gets a kick out of fooling the police.

But skill alone is not enough: the photographer must also have luck. A few years ago, a photo reporter in Shanghai rushed off to a department store in Nanking Road where a time bomb had exploded. When he got there, however, he was not let in, as the police would have no photographs taken until the Commissioner of Police had arrived on the spot. While he was still racking his brain to find a way of bamboozling the minions of the law, another bomb went off right next to him and he was able to make photos of the second outrage before the police had had time to get to the new spot.

In America the press photographers are especially keen on snapping gruesome or tragic scenes, as the public in its craving for sensation likes pictures of that kind. After a mine disaster, when the families are still uncertain about the fate of the men, the photographers try to catch the facial expressions of anxiety and grief, although the very presence of photographers at such moments is disagreeable enough.

#### CAMERA-SHY

Very often photo reporters are handicapped by camera-shyness on the part of those celebrities whose photos the public wishes to see. The famous conductor

Arturo Toscanini is known the world over for his hostility toward cameramen. In former years, concert agents were of course justified in not permitting photographs to be taken during concerts, as this may have interfered seriously with the performance. But nowadays flash-bulbs are used which are both silent and odorless. Moreover, concerts can now even be photographed without any additional light by means of special lenses and extremely sensitive films, so that the optical disturbance of a sudden flashlight is obviated. Consequently, Toscanini's hostility is no longer an objective but simply a personal one. Indeed, this personal hostility goes to such lengths that on leaving airfields, railway stations, or hotels, he always covers his face with a coat or an umbrella to prevent a photograph being taken of him. In such cases the photo reporter sometimes tries to trick his victim.

The former world champion Gene Tunney was photographed times without number as a boxer. Once, on a trip to Europe, however, he did not wish his private life to be molested. In Berlin, for instance, he refused to pose for the photographers waiting for him at his hotel. One of the camera hounds had an idea: he had Tunney notified that there was an oversea telephone call for him which he could only take in one of the booths in the hotel lobby. Tunney naturally hurried into the booth and was photographed through the glass panel. With the flash of the bulb, however, he realized that he had been duped. He flung himself out of the booth and knocked down the photographer. Afterwards he apologized, since he saw that the reporter was, after all, only doing his job. Greta Garbo, too, avoids the camera as much as she can when she is traveling. In spite of disguise, which she affects as a weapon against photo hunters, she is, however, often recognized and photographed.

#### SOME LIKE IT

In contrast to the camera-shy enemies of the reporter, there are many per-

sonalities in public life who are his friends. They do not mind his activities and enjoy the publicity to be gained through him as well as the photographs of themselves which he takes. There was, for instance, a Foreign Minister who had his own photo reporter accompanying him on his trip through Europe and America. In addition to this, he asked the local cameramen in most of the capitals to send him copies of the photos they had taken of him.

Adolf Hitler has been photographed in every phase of his political life by Heinrich Hoffmann, who has been one of the Führer's most intimate friends since the earliest beginnings of the National-Socialist movement. One can say that there is not a single illustrated journal anywhere in the world that has not used a Heinrich Hoffmann photo at one time or another. Reich Propaganda Minister Goebbels has always maintained excellent relations with press photographers. He appreciates the value of photographs of topical events for propaganda purposes, and he is responsible for the fact that press photographers are given every possible assistance in Germany.

The friendly attitude of Japanese celebrities toward photo reporters is well known. Any ceremony may be photographed, and Japanese dailies use many photographs. The sympathy shown the press photographer in Japan relieves him of a lot of the trouble which his colleagues have to face in other parts of the world.

#### YOU NEED LUCK

When King Alexander of Yugoslavia began his ill-fated journey in the autumn of 1934, the Belgrade newspaper *Politika*, which was close to the Belgrade Foreign Ministry, made an agreement with the French branch of a photo agency, according to which six photographers were to be placed at different points in Marseilles to record the arrival of King Alexander on French soil. All arrangements were made for the pictures to be cabled from Marseilles via Paris to Vienna and to be fetched from there by a special Yugoslavian plane. And indeed, as a result of

this well-organized method, the *Politika* received numerous photos whose early publication—in spite of the long distances involved—caused a sensation throughout the Balkans. Nevertheless, the editors of the *Politika* were very disappointed; for, among all the pictures, the most important one was missing: that of the assassination of the King and the French Foreign Minister Barthou.

In spite of all painstaking preparations, the particular spot along the King's route in Marseilles which became historic as a result of the assassination had not been included in the instructions to the six press photographers. A movie operator who worked for a newsreel concern and simply happened to be on the spot at the right moment sold his newsreel photos of the actual assassination to another photo agency which had an agreement in Belgrade, not with the *Politika* but with its competitor, the *Vreme*. Thus, by publishing the photo which clearly showed how the mounted officer accompanying the motorcar containing the dying sovereign and the fatally injured statesman struck down the assassin with his sword, the *Vreme* could more than make up for the loss of prestige it had suffered through the express photo reporting of its competitor. Here again, it was good luck rather than good management to which the *Vreme* owed its success.

#### SPEED, SPEED, SPEED

A photographer working with one of the large photo agencies must make it a point to get hold of the earliest and swiftest means of communication for transporting his pictures. If a photo is not cabled but still has considerable topical value, the press photographer dashes off to the airfield to dispatch his wares as air freight, hoping in this way to outdo a rival using airmail. For the recipient of air freight is handed his consignment at the airport of arrival within a few minutes of the plane's landing, while the delivery of airmail takes about three hours.

The basis of all speed is the rapid developing of the photos in the darkroom.

By properly preparing quick-working chemicals, the press photographer can develop his photos and produce good copies within seven minutes of having entered the darkroom. Skill in handling the photos and high temperatures of the chemical solutions used contribute greatly toward the speeding up of this process.

In ports like Shanghai, the urge for speed forced the photographer to keep a close watch on shipping schedules. When the head post office was already closed for the acceptance even of express mail, one could still try to post the package on board the ship itself just before its departure. When a ship had already left for America, the photos could still be sent by airmail to Japan in time to catch the boat in Yokohama and thereby arrive in San Francisco earlier than a consignment sent by the next ship from Shanghai. When the Clipper service was started, this naturally became a favorite method of conveyance. In this way, rivalry forces the photo reporter to become an expert in means of transportation who always knows how the length of time required by ordinary mail can be cut down.

#### CAN PHOTO REPORTERS BE FRIENDS?

Rivalry among press photographers is not limited to speed in dispatching photos; they often use other methods, too, to get in ahead of their competitors. There is hardly any other profession with as great a rivalry. It often happens that one photographer tries to impede another. The handshake of two celebrities cannot be photographed by one cameraman if another suddenly stands in his way, and only too often is an interference of this kind intentional in order to prevent any competition for one's own picture. Even friendship is no obstacle to competition.

When Prince George of England (the late Duke of Kent) got engaged to Princess Marina of Greece, two photographers, who had been friends for years and whom we shall call Dupont and Duval, went to Veldes in Yugoslavia to make photos of the young couple for their London agency. Dupont rode back to Paris on a powerful motorcycle, while

## PHOTO SCOOPS OF THE PAST



**1863** The opening of the Vatican Railway Station in Rome by Pope Pius IX. The photograph shows Pope Pius IX standing in one of the open private coaches which were greatly admired at that time as being the last word in comfort.



**1886** The first photo interview. This example is taken from an excellent series made by the famous photographer Nadar of his visit to the 100-year-old French chemist Chevreul. Chevreul is saying: "You see, up to my 97 year I was an enemy of photography. But three years ago I capitulated."



**1914** A scoop indeed: the arrest of the assassin of Sarajevo. By assassinating Archduke Francis Ferdinand of Austria on June 28, 1914, Gavrilo Princip started the chain of events which swiftly led to the outbreak of the Great War.



**1917** Revolution in St. Petersburg. Seldom has sheer panic been so well reproduced in a photograph.





Goalie bites the dust in Buenos Aires football game. He has carelessly let a ball get in past him and throws himself down in fury



The wife of Robert A. Taft, making a speech during her husband's campaign for presidential nomination in 1940



The President of the United States sticks out his tongue at Vice-President Garner, after the latter has ruffled his hair during an official dinner in 1940

## What the Americans like: the ludicrous, the cruel, the absurd



Mrs. Hauptmann has just been told the news of her husband's execution for the kidnaping and murder of the Lindbergh baby

Morgan and the midget. An impudent reporter has placed a midget on camera-shy J. P. Morgan's knee during the Senate Banking Investigation in 1933



Duval had to wait for train connections. So Duval asked his friend to take along his own film pack too. When, after having arrived in Paris by train, he saw his films, he found that every single one of his twelve photos was smudged. Dupont tried to explain this by faulty material, but Duval was convinced that they had been smudged by someone purposely pressing his thumb onto the film pack.

But this was not the only difference of opinion to arise between the two "friends." One day a police officer came to Paris from New York to fetch a criminal who was to be extradited to America. The police officer informed the press that he would leave Paris the following morning, but omitted to mention the train he and his prisoner would use. Most of the photographers waited on the platform beside the morning express leaving at 8.20. Only Duval found out through his secretary, who had spent the previous evening with the American police officer, that the interesting travelers would leave with the slow train at 6.40 a.m. Duval was there in good time and took exclusive photos of the two in the compartment. Some of his pictures he sold in Paris, and the others he sent by the fastest route to New York.

The Paris morning papers published the photograph, and Dupont saw it. He asked his successful colleague to let him have one of his negatives for a good price in order that his New York agency would have no grounds to reproach him. Duval, however, was not to be persuaded. But Dupont was not beaten yet: he took the next express and arrived in time to make some snapshots of the couple at the quayside and to forward them by the same ship that was carrying the supposedly exclusive photos of his "friend."

#### AGENCIES AND PRICES

Just as the press of the various countries differs, so do the working methods of the press photographers. The American tabloids demand close-ups at any price. The main photo must be taken at a distance of not more than three yards,

so that the photographer must practically force himself on his victim, even when pity or other considerations call for a more tactful procedure. Crimes such as the kidnaping and murder of the Lindbergh child give American photo reporters an excuse for ruthlessly invading the families of relatives, for turning private possessions upside down to find interesting objects, and for mercilessly photographing persons and objects in spite of all protests.

The European press photographer is more considerate. Ceremonies and other affairs of a certain formality are photographed in Europe from a distance of not less than six meters, and the same is true in East Asia.

In every country there are photographers who specialize in certain subjects and who are not interested in the thrills and sensations experienced by the photo reporter concentrating on topical themes. They devote their attention to sports, fashions, or the theatrical world and in time achieve excellent effects which could not be produced hurriedly. Many magazines fill their pages with such pictures, some of which are praised and paid for like works of art.

Large photo concerns such as Associated Press, Keystone Press Agency, or Wide World Photos, receive photographs from all over the world, make hundreds of copies, and send their photo services to thousands of newspapers and magazines either directly or through agents. Newspapers either subscribe to photo services on a monthly or yearly basis or pay for every picture published on a basis previously agreed upon. Some of the agencies pay a fixed monthly amount to photographers for their work; but it is more usual to work on a fifty-fifty basis. In many cases the local distributing agent is identical with the photo reporter. In this way he receives fifty per cent of the amount collected by his photo concern for selling his own photos abroad, while he also keeps fifty per cent of the amount which he collects from local newspapers for pictures from his photo concern.

For the right of first publication of highly topical and exclusive photos, news-

papers pay special prices, and these prices vary in different countries. In August 1934, the *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung* paid two thousand marks for an exclusive photo of President Hindenburg on his deathbed. The same publishing house paid a similar price for a cabled photo of the Zeppelin disaster in New York. The *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung* as well as the *Münchner Illustrierte Presse* are known to all the photo agencies of the world as publications paying the highest prices for topical photos and illustrated stories. Good prices are also paid in England and America. Average photos are paid for at approximately the same rate in these three countries, namely an amount corresponding to from ten to twenty marks.

#### UNEXPECTED TROUBLE

Now and again it may happen that the publication of a photo leads to very unwelcome expenditures. This is the case when infringements of the copyright laws provide an occasion for suing for damages. These laws are a windfall for those who want to exploit actual or alleged damage to ensure themselves of an extra income by legal action.

In the case of paid photo portraits, the latest formulation of the international copyright law reserves the copyright not, as formerly, to the photographer but to the person portrayed. This fact often not being known to studio photographers, it frequently happened that they gave newspapers a negative of some person who had for one reason or another got into the limelight of publicity, and that they were then very dismayed to be faced by a claim for damages on the part of the subject which was hundreds or even thousands of times greater than the amount received for the publication of the photo.

During the Stavisky affair, which in 1934 filled the columns of newspapers all over the world for weeks on end, a photo was published showing the swindler Stavisky sitting with his beautiful wife at a table in a Paris night club. The photo had been dug out from some old

files and had been made during Stavisky's palmy days. Among the other people to be seen in the background of the picture there happened to be a bank clerk who, upon the advice of a shrewd lawyer, claimed that the copyright law entitled him to being asked for his consent before a photo was published in which he was shown. He stated that he had suffered greatly by the unexpected publication and claimed heavy damages.

The confusing of two picture texts started off a suit for damages which cost the London *Daily Express*, Lord Beaverbrook's paper, and the Keystone Press Agency a thousand pounds sterling. The Keystone Press Agency had assembled a number of portraits of beautiful revue actresses made by its Vienna and Budapest photographers. Among the Budapest photos there was one of an actress who had publicly promised a kiss to every theater-goer in the stalls of the theater in which she appeared. By some mistake the photo of a Viennese actress got this Budapest text attached to it and was published in this form in the *Daily Express*. The newspaper played up the story and described in an accompanying article how this promise of a kiss had ensured a full house and dozens of repeat performances. Naturally, the *Daily Express* is hardly read in Vienna, and under normal circumstances probably no one would ever have found out about the mix-up. But fate so willed it that this particular Viennese actress had met a London lawyer, got engaged to him, and subsequently went to London to marry him. The lawyer, however, became so indignant about the alleged kiss publicity of his fiancée that he broke his engagement. As a result the actress filed her suit for a thousand pounds damages.

#### WAR DUTY

Large magazines with editions of millions of copies as, for example, the *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung* and *Life*, have their own photographers on their editorial staff, whom they pay very well. The editor-in-chief sets the themes for these salaried photo reporters, themes which



sometimes lead them into distant parts of the world and into all kinds of adventures. Carl Mydans, a young photographer attached to *Life*, happened to be traveling by ship to Europe for his magazine when the ship was sunk. He made a scoop with his photos of the sinking and of the shipwrecked people being saved by the crew of the German vessel. Later Mydans was sent to East Asia and was caught by the outbreak of war in Manila. He has meanwhile been sent back to America on an exchange ship.

The present war has taken many photo reporters into the front lines. The war press photographer is one of the most important factors in war propaganda, for through him the war events are documented by pictures. In Germany the war photographers as well as movie operators and editors have been organized by the Propaganda Ministry and attached to the various arms for front-line photo reporting. And everyone in East Asia has seen the photographs taken by bold Japanese photographers in the midst of fighting. The cameraman is to be found in the foremost lines with the tanks, infantrymen, etc., to provide the people at home and all over the world with photographic documents of the course of the war.

In air attacks the pilot braves the anti-aircraft fire and returns at a low altitude to the target bombed in order to give the photo reporter on board an opportunity to take back films showing the success. In addition to courage, the photographing of war actions in the front

lines, of infantry or tank attacks, of battle actions on board a battleship or cruiser, require great photographic skill. And many a war photographer has lost his life while doing his job.

In war as in peace, wide use is made by press photographers of telephoto facilities. Here science has done wonders and created constructions which in the shortest possible time transmit photographs from one end of the earth to the other. And yet it is not a very complicated apparatus, consisting chiefly of an electric eye which records every square millimeter of the picture. According to whether the dot on the picture just being registered is white, gray, or black, the vibration of the electric current changes, and it is these changes in vibration which are transmitted and recorded on a negative at the receiving end. All dots registered complement each other and form a complete negative, which is then developed and copied.

Newspaper readers anywhere in the world glance over their daily paper. They read of events that have taken place thousands of miles away. Before having gone off to work, they are already informed of everything that has happened in the inhabited world. And simultaneously with the news they see the photo in the paper, the work of the press photographer. Wherever anything happens, the photo reporter sees to it that the event is photographed, and no event of importance can escape him. When the history of our days is written, the archives of the press photographers will be indispensable.

## Two Tunes

When Ulysses Sidney Grant, the hero of the American Civil War, had become President of the United States, he was invited one evening to a musicale at the home of a foreign diplomat. The hostess valiantly played a Chopin polonaise and, as was only natural, asked the President how he had liked it.

"It's no use asking me, ma'am," said Grant. "I only know two tunes: one is *Yankee Doodle*, and the other isn't."