

His Artistry Deceives Ducks, So Well Does He Copy Nature's Handiwork

By H. O. BISHOP

Well, friends, the other day I solved something that has been puzzling me ever since that happy day when I came to dear old Bridgeport.

The very first day I was here I heard the word 'Shang.' Almost every day since, I have heard that word 'Shang' from all sorts of people. And when I wasn't hearing it I was seeing it in the papers.

But everytime I asked anybody to tell me the meaning of 'Shang' they glared at me in a sorrowful sort of way indicating pity for my utter ignorance.

All right! All right! Now they can all trot away to the place I wouldn't think of mentioning. I'll never again ask anybody. I don't have to. I now know dear old 'Shang' a darn sight better than lots of them do.

A Rare Soul Is He

And am I glad? What a rare soul! He is! Different, in a better way from others. The moment I spied his ears I knew his heart was far and away bigger than his body. I doubt whether there is a more worthwhile pair of ears east of the Golden Gate or north of the Gulf of Mexico.

He was tagged with 'Shang' in a peculiar way. It was long ago, when he was a 14-year-old stripling in the military school at Weston, run by Gen. Andrew S. Jarvis, a real educator who taught fundamentals instead of soft sissy stuff as hopeless and useless as a cow with an elephant's tail in flytime.

The students were attending the Danbury Fair. The big attraction in front of the poultry building was the tallest Chinese in the world. His name was Longchang Chang. He claimed that any student could stand under his outstretched arm.

All of them did except a long-garred lad named Charles Edward Wheeler. That incident made him an instant hero. From that day to this he has been known everywhere as 'Shang' Wheeler.

I'm sure he has more friends in all walks of life than anybody I've ever known anywhere. Wherever he goes, men, women and children happily sing out "Hello 'Shang.'" Darned if I believe there's a person in the county who doesn't really love the man.

Gives Health Formula

He says the secret of health is happiness. And the secret of happiness lies in doing what you like to do. Then he chuckled softly and said he guessed he had found most of his happiness in hunting, fishing, whittling, raising dogs and, possibly, a little hell upon occasion.

His ancestors were hunting and fishing and doing big things in shipbuilding and other business back in the sixteen hundreds. Moses Wheeler, a community leader, died in Stratford eight years before the birth of Washington. Augur Wheeler, another ancestor, soldiered in the Revolution.

How do you suppose 'Shang' earned his first dollar? Weeding onions at Compo in the vicinity of the Longshore Country club. Paid by the row. Short rows five cents, long rows 15 cents. Years ago that was the greatest onion growing section in New England. It was nothing to ship half a million dollars worth of them to New York each season. That was when Long Island Sound was full of boats.

His mother died when he was two. Brought up by others.

Our best known prayer, Now I Lay Me Down—was a great favorite in his childhood.

Host To Wild Ducks

He was a lone eagle in his boy-



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hood. Loved to roam through the woods where he could see thousands of interesting and exciting things. Wild ducks always fascinated him. Still do, visit him twice a day and dive!

He loved to commit many songs to memory and sing them to his heart's desire as he roamed around the country. Among his favorites were Grandfather's Clock, Jenny, My Own True Love, and Wait Till The Sun Shines, Nellie.

Hearing that the world famous, Adelini Patti was going to sing at Worcester, Mass., he managed to rake and scrape enough money together to go there and hear her. Her encore, The Last Rose of Summer, made a life-long impression on him.

For years the annual minstrel show of the Norwalk Fire department was a must with him. Liked opera because of the good music. Never passed up vaudeville.

Well, friends, I declare to goodness, I thought dear old 'Shang' would blow half a dozen fuses out of his windpipe, and elsewhere, when I casually asked him what he thought of Henry Wallace and communism. His usually calm gray eyes flashed like frenzied searchlights in a hall and lightning storm.

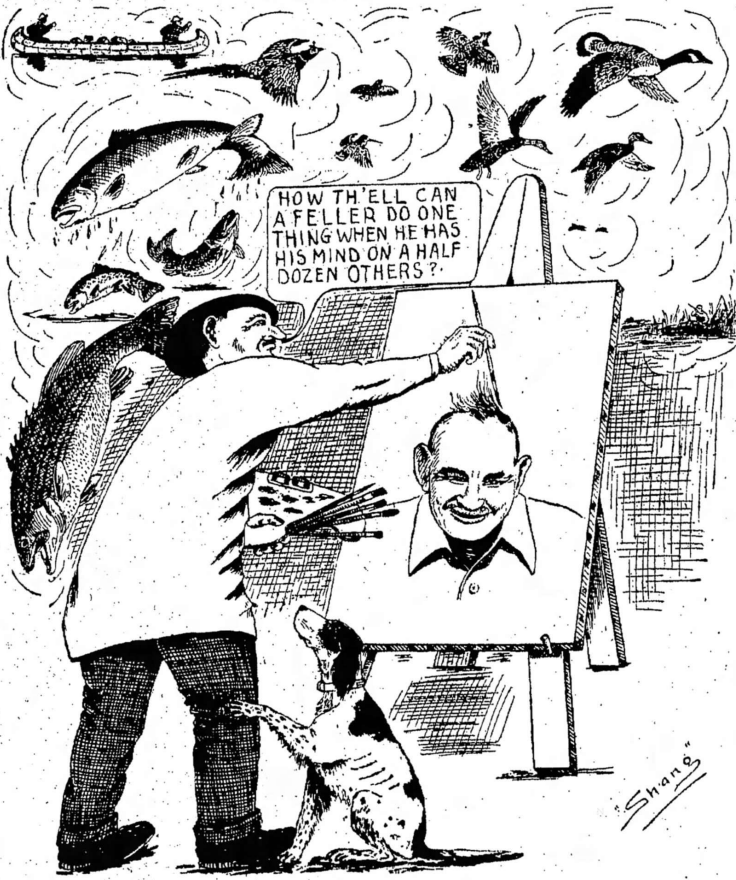
No Use For Commies

If Roosevelt's Wallace could have heard him, he would have plucked out his vicious hair, ripped out his tumultuous tongue, wrapped himself in sickly silence, and joined those little pigs he murdered years back.

In the late eighties Shang was in



CHARLES E. WHEELER



'Shang'—of 'Shang' Drawing 'Shang' By 'Shang'

his glory in the field of boat racing. He plotted many famous boats to victory on Long Island Sound and waters adjacent to New York. How he did enjoy that sort of sport!

Wish you could see the dozens of models of sailboats that made world history. One of his big offices is filled with them. What an interesting display they would make in a modern museum—! Bridgeport had one.

Somehow I have a hazy hunch that the time is ripe for some generous Bridgeporter to give the dough for a fine fireproof museum to be located at the University of Bridgeport, within reach of everybody. Darn it, there's nothing too good for good old Bridgeport.

There's no question but that 'Shang's' star shines brightest in the field of painting and whittling than in all other fields.

He has a bushel or two of ribbons won in this realm. His duck decoys are known all over America. He makes all kinds, particularly canvass backs and mallards.

Ducks Are Fooled

I defy any human being on earth to tell the difference between 'Shang's' ducks and the live ones when they are bobbing around on

the water. The real ducks oftentimes have a hard time convincing themselves that 'Shang's' are not the real McCoy. It's downright amusing to see them flying down from the sky and trying to do a little flirting.

'Shang's' whittling is not only perfect, but he reproduces their feather coloring so perfectly as to fool birds and humans.

It is conceded everywhere that 'Shang' is the world's outstanding whittler of fish. That boy can convert a chunk of wood into any kind of fish, large or small. When he gets out his paints and brushes he colors up the wooden fish exactly as does nature. To save your soul you can't tell the difference. Never took a painting lesson in his life. Began whittling when his father thought he was old enough to use a knife.

Isn't it an honor to have a man of 'Shang's' genius living in our community?

Expert on Bivalves

Somewhere along the Atlantic Coast there may be somebody who knows half as much about oysters as does Shang—but nobody believes it.

Most people think an oyster is

where men enjoy hunting. His particular pet and pride of today is Tom Lincoln, the second, named in honor of President Lincoln's father.

Some years ago, a pointer of his, named Lord Samson, did something that Shang thinks was the smartest thing any dog, anywhere, has ever done. Lord Samson flushed a woodcock. Bang went 'Shang's' gun. Down fell woody. Samson picked it up and was trotting toward 'Shang,' when he pointed another woodcock. Again banged 'Shang's' gun.

Dog Solves Puzzle

For a moment the dog was a trifle puzzled. Retrieving two birds at one time was an unheard of experience.

But, he managed it. With great care he got both in his mouth and delivered them to his happy master.

Some years ago 'Shang' was a member of the Connecticut Senate and House. Believing that no animals should be maimed for purposes of style, he introduced a bill prohibiting the cutting of dogs' ears and the bobbing of horses' tails.

Many years ago Shang added the art of cartooning to his many other accomplishments. He is putting it to excellent use in the present intelligent campaign against the pollution of Connecticut's streams.

Bitter, indeed, is Shang against the heretofore wild, crazy, careless, greedy way that the public destroyed natural resources through the unforgivable pollution of pristine streams by ruthlessly dumping town sewage into them. Also poisonous trash from many industries.

It was cheap, easy, but, oh, so destructive. For years nobody seemed to give a darn. Now they're wide awake and realize that a big source of food supply has disappeared. Fish are fussy about their grub—more so than people.

Nature Out of Balance

In the meantime monster trees were timbered. Pitiless sunlight hit the earth, rain ran off in a hurry, causing floods. Earth dried quickly, washed away quickly. No shelter left for bird and animal life. Nature's balance went cockeyed. Man had joined the predators, and the devil was to pay. Now, men are penitent and seek forgiveness.

Willing to make amends for their

wanton destruction, men now are promoting a sensible restoration program. Reforest our idle and denuded acres. Provide shade, cool water, keep soil from washing away, restore thousands of nice cool springs that will slowly flow into hot streams, making them desirable for fish. Plenty of upland shade will provide food and protection for birds and animals.

Keep your eye on dear old Connecticut. She can, must, and will put over this restoration program.

just an oyster. Shang will convince you that an oyster is a stroke of genius and should be highly respected. Surely knows how to keep its mouth shut.

'Shang' had the scare of his life in Florida. A wounded alligator bit an eight-foot ash rowboat oar plumb in two. He said he got the aitch away from there before the darn thing smashed his boat into smithereens with a slap of his powerful tail. Years of experience and observation has convinced him that there's nothing quite so vicious as a wounded alligator. He ran afoot of that mad 'gator while fishing.

During his long and happy life 'Shang' has fished in practically every river and along the entire coast line from away up in the mouth of the St. Lawrence down to the tip end of Florida.

Great Lover of Dogs

'Shang' admires dogs as much as some men admire horses and women. He looks upon dogs as a great institution—something decidedly out of the ordinary, worthy of deep respect and kindness. His reputation as a breeder of Llewellyn setters is nationwide. His dogs are scattered everywhere