

Researched by, Rick Proft

World Famous
H. V. Kaltenborn
Comes Back To His Hometown of Merrill
Wednesday, June 14, 1939 - Friday, June 16, 1939



H.V. Kaltenborn along with his wife, Olga and daughter, Anais arrived aboard the Chicago-Milwaukee road train at the Merrill Railroad Station Wednesday morning, June 14, 1938. H.V.K. 's old time childhood friends and acquaintances greeted the disembarking Kaltenborn family. This would be the first ever Merrill visit for his family and for himself, since becoming world famous after his numerous comprehensive CBS Radio broadcasts during the Munich crisis. From September 12th through the 30th of 1938 more people in the world tuned in and listened to H.V. Kaltenborn's perspective and analysis than from any other source. H.V. was uniquely qualified in bringing listeners the world news coverage and perspective about all the ongoing tensions that resulted in the eventual "Munich Agreement," which did temporarily resolve the Sudeten German territory conflict, but with hindsight, would become a precursor to World War II. H.V. Kaltenborn was fluent in English, German and French, so he had the ability to translate all the European news wires and radio broadcast feeds instantly, as they were established through the advanced technology that connected CBS New York Studio 9 with their European bureau counterparts. He had unparalleled insight into world affairs and this crisis in particular, since he had known and interviewed all the prominent leaders involved including; Adolf Hitler of Germany, Tomáš Masaryk and Edvard Beneš of Czechoslovakia, Édouard Daladier of France and Benito Mussolini of Italy. A "Best Seller" book, "I Broadcast The Crisis," written by H.V. Kaltenborn chronicling in detail the unfolding events regarding the "Munich Crisis" had just been published and distributed by Random House of New York the November prior to his Summer of 1939 Merrill visit. H.V. Kaltenborn had always been a very busy man, especially in the year preceding his hometown reunion, when in addition to his public speaking engagements, guest radio appearances, his CBS Radio Network commentary broadcasts, he was also contracted to write three columns per week for his former employer. "Kaltenborn Edits the News" columns appeared in the Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday editions of the Brooklyn Daily Eagle Newspaper. While aboard a train returning to New York from Chicago after a "Lecture Tour" on Wednesday, January 26, 1938, H.V. Kaltenborn suffered a gallbladder attack, which necessitated a surgery to remove several gallstones. It was a slow recovery at the Long Island College Hospital and home that would sideline him from his column writing duties for the entire month of February, however Hans returned to CBS Radio earlier on occasion during his convalescence from his home in Brooklyn to Manhattan, by ambulance and made some program broadcasts.

The Cliff Livingston family at their Lake Pesobic cottage hosted and provided lodging accommodations for the visiting Kaltenborns. Hans was furnished a Ford car compliments of Knudson Motors, which he utilized in giving his wife and daughter the grand tour of his childhood hometown and to take them on a Northern Wisconsin day road trip to the former Langley Lumber Camp area near Star Lake and Eagle River, which provided Olga and Anais their first opportunity to see and experience the culture of the Native American Indian tribes.

While driving the Ford with his family northbound on Merrill's on Center Avenue, Hans noticed a familiar name on a mailbox at house number 311. It was the name of his former logging camp boss George Langley. He was the last surviving Lincoln County Civil War Veteran. Mr. Kaltenborn stopped and visited with the elderly man whose friendly recollections and predictions about Hans future and potential in life had now inexplicably changed, at least since the fall of 1899. The George Langley encounters was a favorite story of Hans that he wrote and talked about often. Some of the story details will be excerpted and inserted near the end of this article. George Langley died January 9, 1944 at age 94.

Mr. Kaltenborn went to pay homage at Merrill Memorial Cemetery, at the gravesite of Christian Nelson Johnson, who had passed away Wednesday, February 3, 1937, at age 80 ½ years. Hans had sent a telegram to the Merrill Herald, which was published on page one, explaining that prior speaking engagements would keep from attending Mr. Johnson's funeral. It was C.N. Johnson's mentorship and friendship that H.V.K. had always acknowledged, was perhaps most responsible and inspirational for his career success. H.V. and C.N. had stayed in touch over the years and had communicated frequently, especially during the Titanic sinking, when both of them had the same concern about the fate of their mutual friend Dan Coxon, learning only later the worst possible news had occurred, that he did not survive. H.V.K. was the last person with a Merrill connection to see Dan Coxon alive, back when H.V.'s daughter Anais was only 11 months old. (Separate detailed story)

The Kaltenborns stopped at the Emerich Mercantile Co. store located at 1500-1504 W. Main St. where Hans ordered two "Auto Robes." Hans knew and bicycled with the owner, Joseph Emerich back in the 1890's. Joe was not in the store at the time, however Joe's son Lydon B. Emerich was there and seemed to be thrilled about the celebrity visit and was able to request and obtain an official autographed H.V. Kaltenborn publicity photograph. The 2 Auto Robes were produced at the Merrill Woolen Mills factory located at 105 Blaine St. and shipped to the Kaltenborn Brooklyn home August 7, 1939.

During Merrill Industry tour given by W.B. Chilsen and Charlie Bruce, Hans had mentioned that he would like try some of the Merrill produced canned peas. That conversation made its way to Lincoln Cannery at 2001 Water Street. Manager W.J. Riedner shipped a case of Merrill Peas to the Kaltenborn Brooklyn home, compliments of the Officers of Lincoln Canning Company.

Early Wednesday evening Hans Kaltenborn was guest of honor at "Chilsen's Shack," located southeast of Dutch Corners, for a brook trout dinner given by Walt and Joe Chilsen of Merrill Publishing - The Merrill Daily Herald, which was the successor newspaper of the Merrill Advocate, where Mr. Kaltenborn had launched his most successful journalist career back in 1897. Wausau radio station WSAU broadcast a special public affairs program at 5:45 PM featuring H.V. Kaltenborn commenting on world affair topics raised by the various Wisconsin Valley newspaper editors round table panelists, taking turns with their questions. At the conclusion of Chilsen Shack Dinner-Broadcast, Mr. Kaltenborn made his way back to Merrill to the Stange Park Band Shell where Mayor William H. AuBuchon introduced him during intermission, at approximately 8:45 PM, during the Merrill City Band's inaugural concert program of its 35th season. In the drizzling rain, H.V. Kaltenborn spoke to a large audience about his memories of Merrill and the current progress of the community before the interrupting rain showers arrived and abbreviated his remarks. Inserted are transcripts of the Merrill Daily Herald articles and newspaper articles from St. Point, Antigo and Marshfield papers. Also inserted are, "Thank you letters" received by the Chilsens from some of the editors for being invited to the "Shack" for an evening with H.V. Kaltenborn. As a coincidence Frank W. Leahy, Editor of the St. Point Daily Journal and H.V. Kaltenborn had previously met 41 years earlier at the Junction City train station on June 28, 1898, when the St. Point Wisconsin Central train dropped off its recruit troops and transferred them to the Merrill Special Soldier Train before continuing on their way to Camp Douglas to begin their initial training with the Wisconsin 4th Regiment Volunteers during the Spanish-American War. (Separate detailed story)

After a two-day visit the Kaltenborn family departed at Merrill noon Friday, June 16, 1939 on the Hiawatha train bound for Milwaukee, where it is presumed they would spend a day catching up with old friends and relatives before making their way to Madison in time before the Sunday, June 18, 1939 University of Wisconsin Commencement Exercises where Hans will be delivering the Baccalaureate Address. The following day Monday, June 19, 1939 Hans Kaltenborn was one of five distinguished Wisconsin citizens receiving an Honorary Degree from the University of Wisconsin. (Separate detailed story)

At the end of June and the beginning week of July 1939 H.V. Kaltenborn was in Hollywood, California at Columbia Studios, being filmed for his role in the famous motion picture film, "Mr. Smith Goes To Washington. (Separate detailed story.)

Merrill Daily Herald

Wednesday, June 14, 1939

Page 1

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His Wife And Daughter Make Their First Visit to This City

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Accompanying him were his wife and their daughter, Mrs. Attimore Robinson, Jr., who made their first visit to Mr. Kaltenborn's former home town. Mr. Robinson, who expected to fly from New

MERRILL, WISCONSIN, WEDNESDAY

Will Delay Start of Baseball Game For H. V. Kaltenborn

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H. V. Kaltenborn, Famous News Com- mentator, To Make Short Talk During Evening Program

9th Anniversary



Professor D'Cleve Burkholder will be celebrating his ninth anniversary with the Merrill City Band when he lifts his baton at tomorrow night's concert to direct what is the oldest city band in existence in Wisconsin.

Famous as the oldest band still in existence in Wisconsin, the Merrill city band will begin its 35th year tomorrow with the first concert of the season in Stange Public Park, starting at 8 o'clock.

A distinguished guest at the concert will be H. V. Kaltenborn, the former Merrill newspaperman now world famous as a news commentator. Mr. Kaltenborn, returning for a short visit to the city that once was his home, will make a short talk during the evening program.

Special Broadcast

A special broadcast from Merrill by H. V. Kaltenborn will go on the air tomorrow afternoon at 5:45 o'clock over Radio Station WSAU of Wausau.

When the band was organized in 1904 it was known as the Im-

H.V Kaltenborn Visits His Hometown

Merrill Daily Herald
Wednesday, June 13, 1939
Page 1

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When the band was organized in 1904 it was known as the Imperial band. Only one member of the present organization, William Teske, was affiliated with the Imperial band, which later was reorganized as the Merrill city band. Roy Johnson, who years later was a director of the city band, was the director of the Imperial band.

Ninth Anniversary

Professor D'Cleve Burkholder, Merrill High school music director and director of the city band, will observe his ninth anniversary at the concert tomorrow evening. On June 14, 1930, he directed his first concert with the city band.

Besides Mr. Teske, other veteran bandsmen are Max Heckendorf, Oscar Clovstad, E.E. Howland, Grover Heath and Gerald Howland.

The band now boasts a membership of 35 musicians. Others, besides the director and those mentioned above, are: Olaf Lokemoen, Dale Heath, Henry Vonderheid, Edward Ruprecht, Kenneth Anderson, Melvin Talbot, Ray Semling, Leroy Fleischfresser, Joseph Semling, Jr., Elmer Hitzke, Martin Reinke, Wesley Kamke, Human Mueske, William Frye, Arvin Kunz, James Milney, Gerald Boerschel, Palmer Jaeger, Theodore Lokemoen, Donald Cook, Clarence Wendorf, Hubert Messerschmidt, Garth Heath, Grant Bessey, Lyle Bucholz, Arthur Schilloch, August Fechtner, and E.A. Peterman.

Hitzke Is President

Present officers of the band are Elmer Hitzke, president; Joseph Semling, Jr., secretary and treasurer, and Leroy Fleischfresser, music librarian.

Since Professor Burkholder became director he estimated 30,000 persons have attended 105 concerts.

Professor Burkholder said it is his hope and ambition one day to build the organization into a full symphonic of 75 pieces.

The band, he said, has been able to maintain its present quota of members from the stream of musicians graduated from Merrill High school. As a civic organization the band gives these high school graduates an

opportunity to continue their musical careers. For the greatest part, the band personnel is now composed of former high school musicians, Professor Burkholder said.

The director said the city could feel especially proud of its band since the organization is one of the few that has been continued through the depression.

The program for the first concert:

1. March "Across the Sands" by J.D. Cline
2. Overture "Concentration" by Ed Hozel
3. Popular "Deep Purple" by Peter Rose
4. Concert Waltz "Under the Rose" by H.B. Blanke
5. "Bizzy Trombones" by B.G. McFall
6. Overture "Euranthea" by Van Weber
7. Talk by H.V. Kaltenborn
8. March "Fillmore Triumphal" by H. Fillmore
9. Selection "Maytime" by Sigmund Romberg
10. Popular Polka "Beer Barrel" by Brown and Vejvoda
11. Request, "Little Sir Echo" by Smim-Fearis
12. "On Wisconsin"

Merrill Daily Herald
Wednesday, June 14, 1939
Page 1

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His Wife and Daughter Make Their First Visit to this City

H.V. Kaltenborn came back to his old home town today for a short visit and rest.

The world famous radio news commentator who started his career as a newspaperman in this city before the beginning of the 20th century, arrived on the Milwaukee road train this morning from Chicago.

Accompanying him were his wife and their daughter, Mrs. Attimore Robinson Jr., who made their first visit to Mr. Kaltenborn's former home town; Mr. Robinson, who expected to fly from New York to Chicago and accompany the party to this city, was delayed in New York by weather conditions and will be unable to come here at this time, Mr. Kaltenborn said.

Old Friends Greet Him

It was his first visit since he attended the Merrill homecoming celebration several years ago. Several townspeople gathered at the depot and greeted the visitors on their arrival. Mr. Kaltenborn and his family are guests at the C.R. Livingston cottage at Lake Pesobic during their short stay here.

One of his old friends that turned out to greet Mr. Kaltenborn was Harry R. Allen, former city clerk.

Mr. Kaltenborn will be guest of honor at a trout dinner in the Chilsen shack this evening. Seven Wisconsin valley editors will attend. They are Clifford Ferris, Rhinelander; Fred W. Berner, Antigo; Mark Beyers, Wausau; Frank Leahy and Guy Rogers, Stevens Point; W.F. Hoffman, Wisconsin Rapids; and Howard Quirt, Marshfield.

Wayne Crib, Wausau, WSAU radio station manager also will attend.

On Air Tonight

From the Chilsen shack near Dutch Corners, Mr. Kaltenborn will make a special broadcast public over WSAU at 5:45 p.m. today.

Mr. Kaltenborn will make a public appearance and a brief talk about 8:45 p.m. this evening at the first concert of the city band in Stange public park. The concert is to begin at 8 o'clock.

At the concert he will have the opportunity of renewing friendships dating back to 1890 when he lived in this city.

On Advocate Staff

As a youth with journalistic ambitions, Mr. Kaltenborn began his newspaper career as a cub reporter on the staff of the old Merrill Advocate published by the late C.N. Johnson.

Came the war with Spain and Mr. Kaltenborn enlisted as a member of Company F of this city. After the war he went to Europe and traveled by bicycle through Old World capitals as a roving correspondent for the Merrill newspaper.

Mr. Kaltenborn, after graduation from Harvard, entered the newspaper field in the East and subsequently became editor of the Brooklyn Eagle. He has been linked with radio since about 1925.

Merrill Daily Herald

Wednesday, June 14, 1939

Page 1

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Merrill Daily Herald Thursday, June 15, 1939 Sports Page
Shawano Land O' Lakes Defeat Merrill Parks 3-0
Rain Terminates Game
Umpire Charles Severt calls the game at the end of the 6th inning just before a hard down pour of rain.
Wally Kienbaum was losing pitcher, Debs Loud center fielder.



Merrill Daily Herald
 Thursday, June 15, 1939
 Page 1, Columns 5 & 6
 Cont. Page 3, Columns 2 & 3

**Famous News Commentator
 Is Interviewed By Editors
 In Unusual Radio Program**

The familiar voice of H.V. Kaltenborn, who has become world famous as a radio news commentator since the days trials as a cub reporter in this city, his interpretations of the news and his impressions of the city that once was his home, were received twice by audiences yesterday.

From a woodland retreat near Dutch Corners which the Chilsen brothers of the Daily Herald have dubbed their "shack," Mr. Kaltenborn was presented to the radio audience in a precedent-breaking special broadcast arranged by Station WSAU, Wausau, and this newspaper.

The interviewer of the world notables, Mr. Kaltenborn himself was interviewed on topics of world wide and local interest by Wisconsin Valley editors who gathered at the shack to enjoy a trout dinner with the celebrated visitor.



C. Ferris, H. Quirt & H.V. Kaltenborn
 Outside Chilsen's Shack

Questions From Days News

After a prologue to novel program had been read by Wayne Crib, manager of the radio station which received it by remote control, Mr. Kaltenborn was introduced by W.B. Chilsen, who in turn presented him to each of the editors – each waiting with a question he had taken from the news of the day.

His interviewers were Clifford Ferris, Rhinelander News; Fred W. Berner, Antigo Journal; Mark Byers, Wausau Record-Herald; Frank Leahy, Stevens Point Journal; W.F. Hoffman, Wisconsin Rapids Tribune, and Howard Quirt, Marshfield News Herald.

In his usual crisp and concise style, but in language that fairly bristled, Kaltenborn saw in yesterday's news dispatch dealing with the Japanese blockade of the British concession in Tientsin, China, an attempt made by dictators, notably Hitler, to keep the world embroiled on all sides. He agreed it was part of a "squeeze play" in the field of international politics.

Answers Each Move

As one who watches the world a gigantic checkerboard and considers each move an integral part of the bewildering game of madness, Kaltenborn entertained and enlightened listeners with his detailed interpretations.

Turning from the international situations and complications, Kaltenborn delivered replies to questions dipping into problems of national defense and the third term possibilities of Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Editor Leahy of Stevens Point who like Kaltenborn is a veteran of the Spanish-American War, popped a question framed by himself and his associate Guy Rogers, as to whether recent appropriations for national defense are necessary and if they will be wisely expended.

Rates U.S. Navy Best

He said he believed proper preparedness was in order because of the uncertain state of affairs prevailing throughout the world, and he believed the expenditures would be used to the best advantage. He praised our Navy as the best and air force as formidable although in need of expansion. He declared he had been told by a high authority that this country is not so far behind other nations in the air; that the United States has five airplanes better than any developed country outside this country, while Germany has one which is better than any we have here. He made a plea for continued research on which the United States may base its future development of aerial defenses.

From the subject of national defense he was carried to the White House by another question as to whether President Roosevelt will stand as a candidate for a third term. In the opinion of the speaker Roosevelt probably knows the widespread feeling against any attempt to break the third-term precedent and probably will not attempt a campaign for reelection. However, Roosevelt he said, would remain a potential candidate of the Democratic party until the last possible moment.

Hopkins First Choice

Kaltenborn saw Roosevelt rather as the party leader who would eventually name the Democratic party banner bearer in 1940. He said he believed that Roosevelt's first choice would be Harry Hopkins, secretary of commerce.

If not Hopkins, possibly presidential hopes of a successor would fall upon Henry A. Wallace, the secretary of agriculture who has been attempting to fix up things down on the farm.

And if Wallace were the nominee, Kaltenborn noted, the election might be decided upon the issue of the price of hogs. Any slip Kaltenborn might have risked was quickly averted when several of his interviewers yelled "What about milk and cheese?" He agreed the price of other produce as well as many other things would become factors in the next election.

Fights For Democracy

A question that brought the fast moving, smooth yet thoroughly impromptu interview to a close was asked by Editor Ferris. He wanted to know what was the most ominous situation in the world today.

Kaltenborn said it was the failure of some governments to appreciate the merits of democracy. He closed with a plea that democracy be protected and fought for. Then he went off the air with a cheery "Good Night" to his listeners.

The broadcast was carried through without any difficulty. Facilities for transmitting the broadcast to Wausau were provided through cooperation of the Wisconsin Telephone company and Doering Telephone company. Line tests made Managers William Ives, Merrill and Frank Doering, of Doering insured the efficiency with which the broadcast was staged.

Greeted At Concert

Two and a half hours later a huge throng greeted Mr. Kaltenborn when he appeared on the platform of the band stand in Stange Public park where the Merrill City band, oldest organization in the state, was giving its first concert of the season. He talked of impressions of the changes in the city since he was a youthful reporter here. With the beginning of a hard shower, he cut short his remarks and spent the remainder of time shaking hands with old and new friends and giving his autograph to those who asked it.

During the day Mr. Kaltenborn went to Merrill cemetery to see the grave of the late C.N. Johnson, pioneer from Norway who was publisher who was publisher of the Merrill Advocate and city editor who directed the commentator on his first assignments as a newcomer to the newspaper profession.

Today Mr. Kaltenborn and his family were touring the northern Wisconsin Lakes country. They will leave tomorrow on the Hiawatha tomorrow noon.

A Letter To Hans V. Kaltenborn From Jennie Livingston

Jennie Livingston was living with daughter Isabelle and son-in-law Alexander T. Schick & grandson John D. Schick in Lewiston, Idaho. She apparently made a trip back to Merrill's Lake Pesobic to visit with Son Cliff & the visiting Kaltenborns.

Lewiston, Idaho, July 6, 1939

Dear Hans,

The day before I left Merrill, which was June 30th your books arrived and were proudly shown to all that entered. Next day just as I was leaving your photographs came. I barely had a chance to see them, but I was jealous and felt I too would like to own one. Imagine my surprise and delight when yesterday's mail brought me your splendid likeness, which already has a prominent place on one mantel, it's the only picture that I've seen that half-way does justice to your striking personality. To be frank, when I saw you in Merrill I was amazed to find you so handsome. (The truth and nothing but the truth).

Your book with its friendly inscription graces our living room table. My grandson David was thrilled with your autograph. For book, autograph and photograph accept my warmest thanks, they will be constant reminders of June 14th-15th -16th/39 when I had the great pleasure of meeting your charming and fascinating wife and daughter and also recalled the happy days of yesteryear with you.

I read Mrs. Robinson's letter with great interest and can hardly wait to see "Mr. Smith Goes To Washington". It must be a huge success with you as commentator. Perhaps on your various flights West, between shots, you might have a chance to drop down into our little burg. A room is ready for you in our home, we would be delighted and honored and I heard you would love our part of the county.

We were all so happy to hear your family loved Merrill and its surroundings; as I found everyone is anxious to see you all in the near future.

Bright and early on Independence Day I read three chapters of your illuminating book and I feel I shall relive those anxious hours I spent with you last September. Those broadcasts will never be effaced from my memory.

My very best regards to your wife and daughter whose charm and unusual personalities endeared them to us all. I would indeed consider myself fortunate to meet them again. A kiss for the darling baby.

auf Wiedersehen, Hans

Cordially,

Jeanie Livingston.

Merrill Daily Herald
Monday, June 19, 1939
Large Advertisement from the Ford Dealership, Knudson Motors Sales, who provided the Kaltensborns with an auto during their Merrill visit. Re-printed a " Testimonial Thank You Letter" from H.V. Kaltensborn, regarding the Ford V-8 furnished them during their stay.

Nicholas and Ruth Knudson proprietor,
900 E. First St. Merrill
Later building used Kloss, Wanless Electronics
Nick was Mgr. Stange lumber prior dealership.

H.V. KALTENBORN
9 GARDEN PLACE
Brooklyn, New York

Madison, Wisconsin
June 17, 1939

Mr. N.E. Knudson
KNUDSON MOTOR SALES
Merrill, Wisconsin

Dear Mr. Knudson:

I want you to know how much my family and I enjoyed the use of the Ford V-8 you so kindly furnished us during our delightful stay in Merrill last week.

I had especially requested a Ford for our use so my wife and daughter could use it, as they are Ford enthusiasts.

On Thursday we traveled hundreds of miles, way up north of Eagle River and through Flambeau country, where my wife saw her first American Indian in his original setting. All throughout the trip, second only to our appreciation of the wonderful beauty of Northern Wisconsin, was our appreciation of Mr. Henry Ford's car for 1939.

The smoothness with which it carried us over the roads, the ease, the economy of operation, (and we did notice how little gas it used) only confirmed our opinion that our next car will be a Ford.

Thanking you, and all of Merrill for your thoughtfulness and friendly spirit.

Sincerely yours,
H.V. KALTENBORN



1939 Ford Cost \$584 New

Kaltensborn's friend was Harry R. Allen
H.V.K. preferred a Ford's over a Studebaker
Allen & Zander Co.
Studebaker Automobiles 913-917 E. Main
Harry R. Allen Sec-Treas (City clerk) 206 Logan

Of Love and Life, by Olga Kaltenborn

Unpublished Manuscript Pages 6 & 7

The tall pine land of Wisconsin was filled with lumberjacks every winter. There was plenty of work in the timber and Hans learned that a northern camp needed a man to drive a sleigh to the nearby towns and bring in food. For a tall, sturdy boy this was just the thing to use up his enormous energy and it suited his sense of adventure. That winter as a driver helped develop his physical strength and taught him a lot about human nature.

Years later, when our small children would hop onto our bed early Sunday mornings and ask Daddy for a story, his driving the sled for miles through the deep snowy woods, often pursued by a pack of howling wolves (told with soul-shattering sound effects) was a favorite. Making the choice of whether to save his load of meat or himself from the ever approaching wild beasts was the climax.

But once safely in camp he had long, undisturbed evenings to read, immersing himself in history. The owner of the camp, seeing Hans with a nose in a book, would say, "Kaltenborn, you read too much, You'll never amount to anything."

Many years later we went to Madison, Wisconsin where Hans received a degree of Doctor of Laws. He wanted to show me Merrill where he had spent his early boyhood. The little town was not much changed. When we passed a rather large and impressive house, Hans read the name of the man who had owned the lumber camp. So he stopped and rang the bell. A very old man came to the door, He was most effusive and delighted that we had called. "You remember, " he said, "how I always told you that someday you'd become great."

**The Reminiscences of H.V. Kaltenborn
Manuscript - (Later-Published into a book
Oral History Research Office - Radio Unit
By, Ernest Hill - from Interviews conducted Oct-Nov-1950
Pages 14 and 15**

*Langley & Alderson
General Merchandise, Lands & Logs
909 E. Main St.*

The lumber industry was Merrill's chief industry, and I knew little about it. I had worked briefly for one the lumber mills carrying slabs at fifty cents a day. I decided to spend the winter in a lumber camp, just to get the greater knowledge of the industry. I was engaged by Langley and Alderson to run their "Wannegan", as the lumber company's store was called. The wannegan was the store where lumbermen buy their plug tobacco, camp clothing and things useful to a man while he was living

The camp operators ran these stores to keep the men from going in to town which always resulted in their getting drunk, or perhaps being hired by some other camp. There was a great deal of shifting around there was always keen competition between the camps for good men. Twenty-six to thirty dollars a month was the basic wage. Some of the men got up to forty dollars and an expert log handler would get up to fifty dollars. One thing that would hold men in camp was a good cook. The word got around, "You ought eat after Ole Olson, He's good!" Ole Olson was the cook in our camp and helped us keep men who might have gone elsewhere.

This experience gave me a great deal of time for reading. I read Dickens, (naming a lengthy list of authors and books etc. >>>ahead to the next paragraph)

I remember George Langley, my employer, coming to the lumber camp on one occasion and catching me reading. He said to me, "Kaltenborn, you'll never amount to a dam, you read too much. You ought to be around picking up the empty potato sacks and looking after things around here. But instead of that you sit on your tail and read. If you want to get along in the world you better learn to look after your job and not spend so much time filling your mind with all sorts of useless stuff."

In connection with a celebration of Merrill, Wisconsin Centennial they arranged a "Kaltenborn Day" in honor of the small town boy who made good in the big city. That was a few years ago. When I went back to Merrill, old George Langley was still alive and I went to see him. He was happy to be remembered. I was more or less famous because of my radio talks which they could hear up in Merrill, He said: I always listen to you, You know," he continued, I always said, "That fellow Kaltenborn has sense enough to read good books. He's going to get on in the world. He doesn't waste his time. He had forgotten all about his previous comment.


*H.V.K. obviously confused his Merrill visits, he stopped to see George Langley on his 1st visit on June 14, 1939 and not during "Kaltenborn Day," July 3, 1947, during the Merrill Centennial. George Langley died January 9, 1944, at age 94. He had been the last Lincoln County surviving Civil War Veteran.

on Thursday and Friday.

Mrs. T
day from
few days

Merrill Advocate
 Tuesday, October 31, 1899
 Page 5, Column 2

Home Sunday, October 29, 1899



Thurs-
sited a

Hans V. Kaltenborn, who is in the employ of Langley & Alderson, spent Sunday with his parents in this city.

E 24, 1939

Kaltenborn Justifies an Old Boss' "Faith"

BY ROBERT S. STEPHAN
 Radio Editor

THAT modern Horatio Alger influence Just 43 years ago a young low-headed kitchen helper in a lumber camp at Merrill, Wis., sat deeply absorbed in the tribulations of "Hamlet." The kitchen door opened. The camp boss entered.

"You'll never amount to anything," he thundered. "Why don't you clean up this place instead of wasting your time reading?"

Recently the boy and his boss met again—in Merrill. The boy, H. V. Kaltenborn, widely known radio commentator, had just received an honorary doctor of letters degree at the University of Wisconsin. Bill Langley, now 92, was delighted to see his one-time kitchen helper.

"I always knew Hans would grow up to be an important man in the world," said he to his wife. "He was always reading Shakespeare when the other boys were playing cards or gambling."

Cleveland Plain Dealer
June 24, 1939

The past encounters story between George Langley, former lumber camp boss of H.V. Kaltenborn, is picked up by several newspapers nationwide. Apparently there are several varying accounts and embellishments to that story over the years.

1900-1901 Merrill City Directory

Langley George W., [Langley & Alderson,] res. 211 Center av. ...
 LANGLEY & ALDERSON, [George W. Langley, Nathaniel L. Alderson,] general mdse., lands and logs, 909 E. Main. ...
 Lapp Rudolph, lab., res. 609 E. 2d.

Antigo Daily Journal

Thursday, June 15, 1939

Page 19, Columns 4-6

**Northern Newsmen
Meet Kaltenborn,
Merrill Visitor**

**Noted Commentator and Editors
Are Guests at Chilsen 'Shack'**

Most of the readers of The Journal have heard H.V. Kaltenborn broadcast over the radio on news topics, or read newspaper or magazine articles written by him. He is recognized as one of the outstanding news commentators of the day.

Mr. Kaltenborn's boyhood home was in Merrill and he visited there yesterday to renew old acquaintances and get several days rest from his rather strenuous work. This gave Walter and Joe Chilsen, publishers of the Merrill Daily Herald an opportunity of entertaining him as well as the newspaper publishers in the Wisconsin River, namely Wisconsin Rapids, Marshfield, Wausau, Stevens Point, Rhinelander and Antigo.

The Chilsens have what they call a "shack" in the woods some 15 miles north of Merrill just off of highway "C" at what is known as "Dutch Corners." It was here that the newspaper men were invited last evening to meet Mr. Kaltenborn to "break bread" with him. The boys expected a "good feed" for Walter Chilsen has a reputation as a chef as well as a story teller, for the newspaper boys had tasted some of his delicious steaks there before. But this time it was trout, and the way Walter fried them in his outdoor fireplace would put the Waldorf Astoria chef to shame if he even tried to imitate him. Anyway it was a wonderful "feed".

But that was only part of the surprise that the Chilsens had in store, for after being introduced to the distinguished guest, they were told to think up some questions on some topics of the day, more particularly on the foreign situation, and be prepared to ask them over the radio, for arrangements had been made to broadcast from the shack in the woods over station WSAU, and Mr. Kaltenborn would answer them.

Six of the newspaper men were lined up and each in turn was introduced by Walter Chilsen, who acted as chairman, and each in turn asked Mr. Kaltenborn one or more questions. Although the questions covered a wide range of subjects and he had not seen them before Mr. Kaltenborn answered them in a masterful way. It showed an unusual knowledge, which he had at his tongue's end, of the various subjects mentioned.

For half an hour this question and answer program was kept up. This in itself may not have been unusual as it heard over the radio quite frequently; but the fact that the scene was in a shack in a dense forest in northern Wisconsin was most unusual and attracted nation-wide attention. It was an innovation probably never before tried.

Mr. Kaltenborn today is going to take Mrs. Kaltenborn and his daughter who had never before visited Wisconsin, and drive over some of the roads that he used to "cycle" over when a boy. When the writer was introduced, he said, "Antigo, I use to cycle over there occasionally; but I hope the roads are better than they were in those days." The writer took occasion to present Mr. Kaltenborn with a couple of boxes of strawberries, which had only a few hours before been picked from the patch of Earl Klessig, and they were of unusually large size, ripe and delicious. Mr. Kaltenborn said he hadn't seen or tasted such berries for many years.

Mr. Kaltenborn got his first newspaper experiences on the old Merrill Advocate, published by the late C.N Johnson, who also started Walter Chilsen on his journalistic career. A year or so later the Spanish-American war broke out and he enlisted in the Merrill company, it was a coincidence that Frank Leahy of the Stevens Point company and they learned to know each other while in the service, but hadn't met since that time. (Continued)

Antigo Daily Journal

Thursday, June 15, 1939, Page 19, Columns 4 -6
Continued.

Following the war he went to Europe, working his way over on a cattle boat. He traveled over Europe on a bicycle, visiting most of the foreign capitals and interviewing royalty, using his card-"Representative of the Merrill, Wis, U.S.A., Advocate," as an entry.

Coming back to this country he entered Harvard, and after a short experience as private tutor to one the Astor sons, entered newspaper work. He advanced rapidly and became editor of the Brooklyn Eagle. Since 1925 he has devoted most of his time to radio. He visits Europe for several months each year to keep in close touch with the situation there. But neither his travels nor his studies are confined to European matters, for he is widely traveled and he keeps himself posted on all matters of general interest.

It was a pleasure for us to have met him and to have had the privilege of interviewing him over the radio, as well as to have been at the rather unusual and highly entertaining gathering at the Chilsen Shack.

Stevens Point Daily Journal

Thursday, June 15, 1939
Page 1, Column 5

Up At Merrill Kaltenborn Is Hans To Folks

H.V. Kaltenborn may be a world celebrity, but to folks up at Merrill he's first of all plain Hans, one of their own.

Mr. Kaltenborn, famed as a newspaperman, world traveler and radio commentator, came back to Merrill Wednesday for a short visit and rest. Last evening, at Stange park, unaccounted hundreds of people from Merrill and vicinity and even from distant places as Superior sat and stood in a light drizzle of rain during an intermission in a band concert program and heard him speak in response to an official welcome delivered by Mayor AuBuchon.

Mr. Kaltenborn's voice is distinctive enough and heard often enough to be familiar to millions of listeners. His word flow with a naturalness and informality that betoken both a keen mind and a warm personality. And Kaltenborn, talking to his old home folks, left none in doubt that his spirit was gladdened by the opportunity. He talked of old days and friends of his boyhood and young manhood and of the great strides Merrill has made since he left there 30 years ago. There was a note of special emphasis and sincerity in his voice when he talked of the advantages of living in a "garden city" like Merrill.

During the early evening Mr. Kaltenborn was guest of honor at an informal dinner party given by Walter and Joseph Chilsen, old friends of his, at the Chilsen woodland retreat above Merrill. Included among the guests were a number of Merrill men and editors of Wisconsin valley papers. An interesting feature was half-hour radio program carried over station WSAU of Wausau, during which questions were put to Mr. Kaltenborn by other newspapermen present. The questions were mostly relative to world affairs and Mr. Kaltenborn's answers were characteristically illuminating and informative. A brook trout dinner followed and none of the guests outdid Mr. Kaltenborn in appreciation of this and other delicacies spread before them by the genial hosts.

Today Mr. Kaltenborn accompanied by his wife and daughter Mrs. Attmore Robinson, Jr., who are making their first visit to Merrill, made a road trip farther up into northern Wisconsin.

Among those attending the dinner for Mr. Kaltenborn were Frank W. Leahy and Guy W. Rogers of Stevens Point. The meeting of Mr. Leahy and Mr. Kaltenborn was one of old army friends, for they both became acquainted when both were members of the Fourth Wisconsin volunteer regiment, formed for service in the Spanish-American war.

Merrill Daily Herald
Friday, June 16, 1939
Page 1, Column 4

Kaltenborn's Leave City After Visit

Concluding a two-day visit in the city, Mr. and Mrs. Kaltenborn and their daughter, Mrs. Attmore Robinson Jr. departed on the Hiawatha this noon for Milwaukee. Mr. Kaltenborn, radio news commentator and former Merrill newspaperman, will receive an honorary degree from the University of Wisconsin at Madison next Monday.