

Notes on People

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NYTimes

Lawyer for Hughes
Appears, Not Client

Howard R. Hughes did not appear in Manhattan Supreme Court yesterday to prove that he is not dead.

But one of his lawyers was there to submit an affidavit answering a suit brought by two shareholders of an airline taken over by Mr. Hughes in 1969.

Efforts by the shareholders to force Mr. Hughes to appear in person to declare that he is alive smacked of blackmail, the affidavit said. The suit brought against Mr. Hughes and two companies he controls was brought by Victor and Ellen Kurtz, whose lawyer said the couple's objective was to make it possible for them to sue the Hughes companies in Delaware, where they are incorporated.

But, said Chester Davis, the lawyer for the defendants, in the Kurtz suit "inference is plain that the plaintiffs believe if they make enough of a nuisance of themselves, someone will pay them to go away; any extended comment on the claptrap submitted in support of the application to declare Hughes dead would dignify it out of reason . . . and turn the judicial process into a theater of the absurd."

Mr. Davis moved for dismissal of the suit, but Justice Bernard Nadel reserved decision.

In Paris, Isaac Stern, the American violinist, heaved a heavy sigh of relief when he received a telephone call informing him that his precious Guadagnini violin . . .

it's the devils that get all the attention.

At Bethesda Naval Medical Center yesterday, Representative B. F. Sisk, the 64-year-old Democrat of California, underwent aortic surgery for three hours. The surgery was for repair of an abnormal weakening of the main artery carrying blood to the heart, caused by an aneurysm, or abnormal dilation of a portion of the aorta. The operation included the opening of the aorta, lining it with plastic tubing, and reclosing the artery walls. Doctors at Bethesda said there were no complications. . . . The office of Senator Philip A. Hart reported yesterday that a small nodule removed from the Michigan Democrat's right lung last Thursday was not cancerous. The isolated nodule was discovered at Bethesda during tests to determine a possible primary source of a cancerous growth on Mr. Hart's arm.

Well, if she keeps talking the way she did in Augusta, Ga., Tawny Elaine Godin, the recently chosen Miss America, is not exactly going to endear herself below the Mason-Dixon Line. Professed the best-known Southern breakfast dish yesterday, the New Yorker grimaced and said "What are grits? It sounds so awful." And later: "I looked at it and smelled it, but I couldn't bring myself to eat it."

ALBIN KREBS