

THE RIGHT HONORABLE MR. DEAN

Malaprop of Sportscasting

TED SHANE

THEY'RE EVEN makin' a movie of my life," said Dizzy Dean. "They got fifty-eight writers workin' on it, and three actors includin' Dan Dooley is agoin' to play Ol' Diz. They even give Ol' Diz \$50,000 for livin' it!"

He meant "Dan Dailey" — but then Dizzy Dean was never a respecter of personages. In white Texas sombrero, bright yellow sport shirt, and green gabardine slacks, he lolled in the lobby of his midtown New York hotel between telecasts of the New York Yankee home games. A large, ruddy-jawed, handsome, silvering man of forty, he genially included lobbyites, bellboys, and desk clerk in his gabby intimacy.

The story of Jerome Herman "Dizzy" Dean is that of a big, bumptious, ornery, likeable boy who knew he was good, and could prove it. For six noisy, electric years this clowning, gifted athlete strutted across the national scene, making us forget the depression. He almost

turned our national pastime into Disorganized Baseball. He was a Bad Boy, a hillbilly Problem Child — but never in a mean or evil sense. Society had to throw him down, put shoes on him, teach him manners. That took doing, and probably the one person most responsible for doing this was his wife Patricia. "Mom had her hands full," Dizzy readily admits. "It ain't easy to jump a rogue elephant through a small hoop."

The disturbing thing about his bluster was that he made it come true. One afternoon when he was with the St. Louis Cardinals he ambled over to the Boston Braves' dugout before a game, and drawled lazily to the Beantown players: "Don't you fellas worry none about no curves this afternoon. Ol' Diz ain't throwin' none. He's just throwin' fast balls."

Diz kept his word, blazed out a three-hit, 1-0 victory. When someone spoke of bragging, Dizzy snorted: "Braggin'? The way I see

it braggin' is when you ain't got nothin' to back it up."

Baseball washed Dean up at twenty-seven — stilled his mighty arm. But it couldn't still his tongue. Diz became a radio broadcaster. Then in 1950 the New York Yankees hired him to TV their home games at \$30,000 a year. His homely Arkansas argot, his irreverence for the rules of grammar and the airwaves, have made him the pet of the home bleacherite. His Deanisms echo round the land: "Mantle slud into third!" he'd shout. Or "That was a foul ball, folks, and the runners has returned to their respectable bases." Dean never brought Musial up to bat, he got fancy: "There stands Moozell at the plate — he's mighty confidential!" For a finale he urged his listeners: "Don't fail to miss tomorrer's games, folks!"

JEROME HERMAN DEAN was born in three different places on three different dates. "Me and Paul was playin' in Brooklyn one day," he explains, "and the New York papers sent a man over to ask Ol' Diz where he was born, so I tole him Lucas, Arkansas, January 16, 1911. Danged if another reporter don't come and ask me the same. I wasn't agoin' to have their boss bawl them out for both gettin' the same story, so I tole this fella Bond, Mississippi, February 22, which is givin' George Washington a break. Two minutes later I tole the *New York Times*

guy Holdenville, Oklahoma. August 22. They all been nice to Ol' Diz, and I figured they each got a scoop that way."

As befits a man with two careers and three birthplaces, Dizzy acquired two sets of names. Born in a rickety wooden shack on the Arkansas flatlands, the third son of poverty-pinched, migratory sharecroppers, his mother named him Jay Hanna Dean after Jay Gould and Mark Hanna. But when a neighbor's son, Jerome Herman died, little Diz trotted over and to console the father, announced he was taking the boy's name and would make it mean something in the world.

When Diz was three his mother died, and by the time he was six Diz claims he could plow a field with a double-tongued plow. Needed in the fields, Diz was exposed briefly to the Chickalah, Arkansas, schoolhouse. "Went two grades," he reveals. "First was harder than the second, so I quit."

Dean Sr. had been a semi-pro ballplayer, and the entire Dean clan would get in some pitchin' and ketchin' once the day's cotton had been picked. Little Jerome Herman could hit a snake with a rock at forty paces. At twelve he pitched for Spaulding High, near Holdenville — a brilliant ringer, once shutting out Oklahoma City Teacher's College with two hits, striking out fourteen. Little brother Paul played the infield. There was an older

brother, Elmer. One fall the Deans were migrating in two jalopies, caravan style, when a freight train got between the two cars at a crossing. "Darned if we didn't lose Elmer for four years," Diz marvels. "One day Elmer heard about me pitchin' a game on the radio and he come down to Houston to see if it was me. It was me all right."

At nineteen Diz became an assistant meter reader and pitcher for the San Antonio Public Service Company at thirty dollars a week. A scout for the St. Louis Cardinals took one look at his burning fast ball, and signed the embryonic wonder-boy for a \$300 bonus and \$1800 a year. "I never knowed before that you got paid for playin'," Diz says. "It was more money'n I ever earned in my life put together."

Assigned to St. Joseph, Mo., of the Western League, Dizzy made his professional debut by clowning out a 4-3 victory. Introducing himself to each batter, he courteously requested what pitch each preferred, then served it up as hot as a bullet. Swaggering to the batter's box, he collected two hits; ran bases like a jackrabbit; and started a triple play — the first ever to be executed in the league.

He was immediately classified as a Baseball Great — a pitcher with lightning speed, a "thousand" pitches, and built-in baseball instinct. St. Joseph went for him in a big way. The keys of the city were

his — especially automobile keys. A big cigar in his wide grin, in a borrowed car he raced the chief of police through traffic until crowded into the curb and clink. Expansively, Dizzy forgave the chief and talked himself out of the fine.

Since the club paid all bills on the road, Diz became normally confused at home. At one time he was registered at two hotels and the St. Joseph "Y", enabling him and any playboy associates to hit the sack at the nearest handy spot. At month's end he referred all bills to the club treasurer. That they ate up his salary didn't seem to bother Diz. He was always broke.

The front office was unhappily untangling Nature Boy's finances when Diz was summoned up a rung in the Cardinal farm ladder to Houston. He fitted in nicely with the Texas way of life. Wandering into his hotel lobby one morning at 2:00 a.m., long after the ballplayers' curfew, he ran into club president Fred Ankenman. Never at a loss, Diz cried, "I guess me and you will get the devil for this, Mr. Anchorman. If you don't say nothin' about it I won't neither."

NEXT TO GRAPPLE with him was Cardinal manager Gabby Street, a dour, skeptical, ex-World War I sergeant. Diz arrived at "sprang training" in Bradenton, Florida, in 1931, announcing that Cardinal troubles were over for the

year. He'd win thirty for the mother club. When given a chance to exhibit his wares for Branch Rickey and Sam Breadon, the Cardinal brass, he deliberately filled the bases with world champion Athletics, then struck out Simmons, Cochrane and Foxx, baseball's current Murderer's Row, with ten pitched balls.

Rickey was impressed with Dean's pitching but not with his banking habits. Ball clubs provide spring training bed-and-board but no pocket money. Dizzy discovered that checks bought items ex-barefoot boys crave — drink, cigars, shirts and bines. For a time Rickey honored these bits of latex. Then he patiently explained that being with the Cardinals didn't constitute a partnership, and put the Wild Oat on a dollar-a-day allowance.

Diz was expounding in the hotel lobby one evening on owner Sam Breadon — “that penny-pinchin' ol' coot, who oughta be givin' me two dollars instead of one” — when someone tapped him on the shoulder. “Come to my room, Mr. Dean,” the man said. “I'm Sam Breadon.”

Diz disappeared amid shocked anticipation.

Soon he was back, triumphantly waving two one dollar bills. “Got the raise!”

A few days later, however, Mr. Dean found himself on the way back to Houston. It was said he went to keep Gabby Street from going nuts.

At Houston the red carpet was out. Treading it, he spied Patricia Nash, a comely brunette behind the hosiery counter in a shoestore. A week later they were married. Miss Nash vetoed Mr. Dean's proposal that they get tied at home plate in the Houston ball park; smashed a bottle Diz had purchased for a celebration; and ordered him to return a violet-tinted new Hupmobile he had purchased as a wedding present with no down payment. She also loaned him the two dollars for the license.

Diz pitched and won for his new Mom on the wedding day. Mom's first communique read: “Dizzy's got the practical sense on the ballfield. I got it off.”

Jerome Herman became a Cardinal regular in 1932 at \$3000 a year — a standard freshman salary. When his employers began advertising not the Cards vs. the Giants, but Dean vs. the Giants, he discovered that he had a crowd puller (highly underpaid), and it became tougher than ever to bring him to simple justice. He invented the One-Man Strike and the Mid-Season Holdout. He jumped the team in Philadelphia one afternoon and returned to St. Louis. Street wanted him fined, but the Cardinal high command granted him a wage increase instead. When the nation's sport pages delightedly reported the fracas, Dean further cackled: “I heard Rickey tellin' Breadon the publicity I got couldn't have been bought for \$100,000!”

Recognizing no stars excepting himself and those in heaven, Dizzy fogged his pitches by the batters of 1932 for eighteen wins and 191 strikeouts; and in 1933 he won twenty, but by August had so disorganized the Redbirds that manager Gabby Street gave way to Frank Frisch.

Dean affectionately tagged Frisch "the Dutchman," and transferred Street's former headaches to the peppery second-baseman: Diz missed trains, went fishing in "Novus Scofus," entertained lavishly during business hours. Once Dean and several colleagues broke the curfew law. Frisch fined everybody \$100, except Dean, whom he fined \$200. "You're a big shot, Diz," Frisch reasoned. "You're worth double anybody else. That's why I made it twice as big." Dean stalked off, beaming.

The Cardinals of 1934 were the famed Gashouse Gang: Ducky Medwick, Leo Durocher, Rip Collins, Kayo Delancey, and Pepper Martin. All Frisch had to do to control this tobacco-spraying, earthy, baseball-hungry group of mavericks was to control its ringleader, Dean. But by now there were two Deans to contend with. For some time Dizzy had been interrupting his self-flattery with tales of a brother Paul who was even better than himself. To quiet Diz, Rickey dispatched him with a scout to El Campo, Tex., where Paul and Dean Sr. were picking cot-

ton. Diz donned a glove and Paul gave a demonstration. "Where did Paul sign his contract?" Diz inquires. "Right in the middle of that 'ere cotton field."

Paul joined the Cards and was promptly nicknamed "Daffy" by a groping sportswriter. But Paul never did anything daffy: he caught trains, didn't throw his money around, sought advice and took it; he was shy, silent, sweet-tempered.

DIZZY'S NEXT MOVE was to reveal that having made a mistake in his birth date, he had signed a Cardinal contract under age. That made him a free agent to be signed elsewhere for \$50,000 or more.

The entire Dean clan attended the hearing at St. Louis before baseball commissioner Kenesaw Mountain Landis. Rickey sat sourly, flanked by lawyers. Suddenly there was a flareup; Diz and his father were battling each other. Dizzy had the date wrong. "I oughta know," shouted Dean Sr. "I was there!"

Dizzy shook a long finger at Paw. "I was there too!" he shouted.

The Commissioner found for the Cardinals.

"Aren't you ashamed?" cried Rickey, rushing to Dean.

"Sure am, Mr. Rickey," said Dean, radiantly. "But don't it make a heck of a story!"

Another time Rickey gained the upper hand over Dean. One Sunday Diz flatly refused to work. He'd

been advertised to pitch. As he entered the dugout he heard Branch Sr. call to his son: "Did you get the Mayor on the phone?" Before young Branch could answer, Rickey groaned, "Too bad, too bad!"

Diz stuck his head over the dugout. "Did I hear you say Mayor, Mr. Rickey?"

"The Mayor of Alton is coming down with some millionaires just to see you pitch, Diz," Rickey said. "I tried to head them off—but couldn't. What'll I tell them?"

"Don't tell them nothin'. I'll loosen up!"

Dizzy pitched brilliantly to a group of distinguished-looking gentry settled importantly in the Rickey box. "Dad had asked me to go pick out some spectators who looked like politicians," Branch, Jr., discloses. "Dizzy never found out they were phoney."

Dizzy kept things in an uproar with his clowning. He'd disappear and turn up leading a band in a buzzbee. Once Frisch found him and Martin calf-roping and bulldogging at a rodeo with a game to play next day. Another time Diz lit a fire in front of the dugout and warmed up before it in a blanket, pausing to utter loud warwhoops. In Cincinnati he put a cake of ice on home plate to cool it off from his fast ball. If guests at the team's hotel seemed to be getting head colds, Dean undoubtedly had put sneezing powder in the ventilators.

One evening three workmen with ladders invaded the dignified dining room of Philadelphia's Bellevue Stratford and entirely disrupted the dinner hour by proceeding with plans to renovate the room. Branch Rickey, involved in a salad, found it up around his ears when one of the workmen slammed down hard on his table. The trio then surveyed the kitchen and the barber shop, and finally broke up a Boys' Welfare Banquet in the ballroom, getting into an argument during which the smallest of the threesome floored the largest. In the hullabaloo someone recognized Dizzy Dean on the floor and Pepper Martin as his assailant. A good laugh was had by all. Branch Rickey rushed in to find three of his stars on the speaker's platform, telling all about juvenile delinquency, and how boys will be boys!

DESPITE THE DEANS' thirty-three victories, the Cards were floundering in second place by August twelve, 1934. That day the brothers dropped a doubleheader to the Cubs. But after that the boys really bore down, and on September 21, in a doubleheader against Brooklyn, they narrowly missed what might have been baseball's most fantastic record: two no-hit games in one afternoon by two brothers. Dizzy's extrovertism got in the way.

At the usual pre-game strategy session, Frisch went over batter weaknesses, advising Dizzy where to

pitch to such ball-massagers as Stripp, Cuccinello and Al Lopez. Dizzy, who liked to pitch to a hitter's strength, not his weakness, had an exact opposite idea for each man. Frisch's top began to blow, when Dean interrupted. "You're wastin' your time, Frankie," he stated. "It don't look right for an infielder like you to be tellin' a star like me how to pitch." But two were out in the eighth inning before Brooklyn got its first hit off Diz. In the nightcap Paul entered baseball's hall of fame with a no-hitter, an honor that never fell to Diz. "If I'd knowed Paul was agoin' to do that," he sparkled later, "I'da tried for one myself."

Between the games Diz found time to drop into the Dodger clubhouse for congratulations. His usual habit was to invade the enemy lair unostentatiously and be discovered leaning against a post taking in the strategy meeting. Then he'd offer advice — and amble out.

The Cardinals nosed out the Giants on the last day of the season for the 1934 pennant, Dean pitching. Between them the Deans had accounted for forty-nine wins, Diz for thirty. He'd lost twenty pounds working the last month. Thus he looked on the World Series as his personal party. He asked Grantland Rice to get Frisch to let him pitch the first four games and "get it over real quick."

The World Series with the Detroit

Tigers was rough, going to seven games. Then the Deans, who had won two games apiece and the Series, left on a vaudeville tour.

The name Dizzy Dean had begun at last to take on a golden glow. For his labors of 1934 Diz netted \$13,500, including a \$5000 Series check. He appeared on stage, screen and radio; and loaned his magic name to wearing apparel, playing gear, watches, harmonicas and tobacco. He received \$15,000 for a comic strip plugging a breakfast serial and showing Dizzy foiling train robbers by conking them with a thrown baseball. For \$100 he did a commercial telling how he learned to pitch at Oklahoma Teachers College. "I think I'll be a college boy now," he said.

But the next season the Dean act began to miss fire. All Pittsburgh turned out one day to see His Dizziness pitch. Early in the show he disagreed with an umpire over a third strike, then sulkily turned the game into a farce by lobbing the ball over slow motion. As the Pittsburgh batters teed off on him, the crowd booed and started for the exits. A few weeks later when he whimsically refused to stick even his nose out of the dugout, at an exhibiton game in St. Paul, he received the royal razzo from the city.

Dean shrugged it off, but he couldn't shrug off the commercial repercussions when the big-head stories hit the headlines. Dizzy Dean

harmonicas grew still in the land; Dizzy Dean watches stopped running. Dividends, which had reached \$30,000, began melting away. Despite industrial cares, Diz won twenty-eight games in 1935. "I had a bad year," he winks.

Next year Dizzy signed for \$25,005 — the five dollars making him the highest paid pitcher in both leagues, Lefty Gomez receiving \$25,000. Rickey came on Dizzy, however, surrounded by small fry near a miniature golf course, depressed because he was too broke to invite them in for a round. For Patricia persisted with the two dollar-a-day-diet, and Diz strove desperately to augment it. One afternoon he bet a fan twenty-five cents that he could strike out Vince Di Maggio every time he faced him. Pouring on the leather, he turned the trick three times. Fourth time up Vince hit an easy pop fly to the catcher. "Drop it, drop it!" yelled Dizzy. Then Diz struck out Vince.

By now, however, he showed signs of becoming a good boy. He worked like a horse, appeared at exhibitions to sign autographs, and was Lord Chesterfield himself to umpires. Arbiter George Barr folded his arms one afternoon, saying nothing while Diz politely disputed a pitch. "Why don't you answer my question, Mr. Barr?" Diz finally said.

"I did, Mr. Dean," replied Barr. "I shook my head."

"That's funny," Dean said cour-

teously. "I didn't hear nothin' rattle."

Business, which had been bad for Dean Inc., began to pick up. Diz won twenty-four in 1936; the boos were lost in the cheers again.

DEAN WAS PITCHING in the All Star Game at Washington on July seven, 1937, when a hard line drive caromed off his foot. He stayed in the game. Nobody knows what happened next, but possibly in trying to favor his aching toe he pivoted unnaturally and threw out his arm. He was never the same again. Diz had a broken toe and a sore arm, but was soon back taking his regular turn. He had won twelve and lost one; he won only one more game that season.

Next year Rickey sold Dean to the Chicago Cubs for \$185,000 and three good players. The transaction, known as the Sore Arm Deal, was for years looked on as Rickey's smartest piece of horsetrading.

The Cubs went to work on Dean's arm. Johns Hopkins and the Mayo Clinic peered into it. They even hired a "psychotterist" to convince Diz his troubles were all of the mind.

Dean never won more than a handful of games for the Cubs — but his new owners were more than satisfied. He filled the newspapers and the stands, and more than paid off his investment.

For two more years Diz stuck it out, even accepting a cut in wages.

("That's not a cut, it's a operation!") he said). Sent down to Tulsa, he came back up again, won three and lost three. He decided to quit. "He was out of gas, with a skip in his motor," a sportswriter wept.

But was he out of gas?

In 1941 the Falstaff Brewing Company of St. Louis was looking for someone to broadcast games from Sportsman's Park. Dean was suggested and he got the job.

Diz was an instant wow. He knew baseball and could curve a phrase as he had formerly curved a horsehide. His broadcasts featured salty humor, misshapen English, fractured syntax, high spirits and occasional bursts of song. Added to all this was a strong sense of home-town loyalty. Sponsors demand strict neutrality during a sportscast, lest they offend the purchasing power of the opposing listener. Diz would have none of this. He rooted into the microphone like any fan.

His folksy Americana had a poetic tang. A player was "out by a heifer step." "That Mize is so big he could go bear huntin' with a switch." A fly ball was a "tall can of corn" for the fielder. Umpires were "humpty-dumpties" or "three blind mice."

His honest yearnings to see his former team win would cause him to cover his eyes when disaster on the field threatened. One day he caught the opposition's signals. He leaned over the rail of the broadcast booth and bellowed through cupped hands

heard round the park: "Hey, wake up fellas, watch this guy. The old hit-and-run is on!"

DEAN GRAMMAR began tainting the schoolhalls of four mid-western states. Millions of dollars had been spent to eliminate "ain't" from the national vocabulary, and here was a hillbilly putting it back. When moppets started conjugating the verbs "slid, slud, slewed," and "throw, throwed, throwed," the schoolteachers rose in wrath. They complained to the sponsors.

When the fight was carried to the FCC, Diz exploded: "They don't like it when I say Country Slaughter slud into second. What do they want me to say — slidded? Folks from my part of the country understand what I say. I can learn you which is a ball or a strike, and vice visa."

The *Saturday Review of Literature* entered the fray, siding with Dizzy, praising the vigor of his barefoot-boy prose. One Sunday afternoon Dean addressed the schoolteachers. "All I kin say is I believe in a education," he said emotionally. "I wished I coulda got me one. But my mother died when I was three and I had to chop cotton to get me some red beans, cornbread and sowbelly. If I talk like this it's the only way I know."

This reached the schoolma'ams' hearts; thousands of letters poured in. "It was agreed them teachers would learn them kids English,"

said Dean, "and I would learn them baseball."

In 1950 he switched his rich baritone to the New York Yankees' TV broadcasts. The TV screen revealed the large spellbinding Dean personality and "Spart." ("Spart," he once pointed out, "is like pep and gump-tion, like the Spart of St. Louis that Lindbergh flowed to You-rope in.")

Today, at forty, the rambunctious cottonpicker of yesteryear shows signs of becoming an ivied institution. He owns a Texas ranch where he breeds Hereford white-faces, naming the bulls after himself. A tenant farmer sharecrops on "a two-third for himself, one-third for Dean plan." "My father got the opposite," Diz says. Dizzy admits he's a sharp cattle trader: "Learned it from the sharpest they is — Mr. Rickey!"

The Dizzy Deans are childless; but Brother Paul, now owner-manager of the Clovis, N. M., Class C team, has a growing boy who is currently knocking the mitts off high-school catchers' hands. He is the apple of Dizzy's eye, and his career is being closely watched. He's forbidden to throw anything but fast balls. "Throwin' curves is unnatural," lectures Diz, "and a growin' boy is like a tree. Bend a tree the wrong way and it'll grow up crooked. Curves spoil more young pitchers than them big bonuses they give nowadays."

Dizzy appears at times on Bob Trout's "Who Said That?" program, on which such cultural giants as John Cameron Swazey, Quentin Reynolds and "Dean" H. V. Kaltenborn identify the source of current quotations. In honor of Dizzy's debut on the show, Kaltenborn was juggling three baseballs.

"Evenin', Mr. Kattenbone," said Dizzy. (He has always had trouble remembering names.)

Kaltenborn dropped the balls.

At the end of the show Dizzy said in all sincere admiration, "I studied the dictionary and inseedo-peedia all week for this program, but I ain't recognized a sangle word you said, Mr. Cottonbarn."

Said Mr. Kaltenborn, "Mr. Bean, we are even. I haven't recognized a single one of yours, either."

Dean has since frozen the name at "Cattlebaum." Only the other evening in rebuttal to Mr. K's weighty formula on how to handle Russ-see-yah, Dizzy opined brightly: "I don't agree with what you said, Mr. Cattlebaum. My idee is more like this. I'd get me a buncha bats and balls, and sneak me a coupla umpires and learn them kids behind that Iron Curtain how to tote a bat and play baseball instead of totin' a rifle. And if Joe Stallion knowed how much money they was in the concessions at a ball park, he'd get outta politics and get in a honest business."

Boiled Engrams

AN
ELEGY
TO
DIANETICS

Willard
Beecher
and
Calder
Willingham

IN MAY OF last year, from the modest little town of Elizabeth, New Jersey, came a voice that promised complete salvation for mankind on this earth. That in itself is nothing new, but this particular voice was a powerful roar, worth at least a footnote in any account of our troubled age. It was the voice of a man by the name of L. Ron Hubbard. Until this moment, Hubbard had been known as a writer of science fiction fantasies. But now, after fifteen years of intense study, he had created *Dianetics*, a new science of the mind.

The person has not been born who can accuse L. Ron Hubbard of false modesty. The opening sentence of his book, which was a best-seller for many weeks, has been quoted before, but it can be quoted again. Let the reader laugh and shake his head, or chill to the implications that can be drawn from the success of a work that begins in such a manner as this: "The creation of Dianetics is a milestone for man comparable to his discovery of fire, and superior to his invention of the wheel and the arch." Why is fire more important than Dianetics, you are tempted to ask, but of course Hubbard doesn't actually say that fire *is* better, it's just comparable.

Specifically, what did Hubbard promise? It can be summed up readily. His new science of the mind, Dianetics, was a sure cure for everyone's mental ills. And not only was