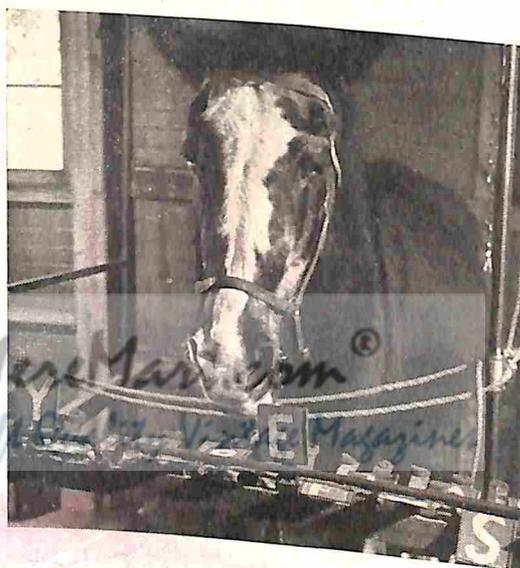


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ABOUT THE PEOPLE 'LIFE' HAS TO DISAPPOINT

There are those who, for one reason or another, expect to be seen on LIFE's pages, even on the cover, and who don't appear at all. This is because we make assignments aimed at *possible* success rather than the sure thing. If it seems that we *might* get an unusual article we take a gamble. We risk time and money, but sometimes people who help us feel, understandably, that they've been let down. There are as many reasons for a project to fail as to succeed. Our photographers may go out to cover the balloon ascension only to find that, after mighty preparations, the balloon doesn't go up. Sometimes when the balloon does go up the light fades, the camera may develop mechanical trouble and there have been times when the photographer himself failed. At other sad times subjects—or publicity people—have promised the balloon would go up and their promises have proved overoptimistic. And there are impostors going about saying they are LIFE photographers.



Sometimes, even after everything has gone right, a good story doesn't get in. Usually this is because each week we try to give you a balanced diet. It may be that a perfectly good article isn't quite so good as a similar candidate. One western movie may be more interesting than another, a sauerkraut soiree may produce better pictures than a cabbage klatsch.

Our people always try to explain in advance that the story may not be published. They don't know themselves, actually, and because they try hard they are sometimes more disappointed.

Fortunately it is possible to end all this on a happy note. Last week Photographer Hank Walker and Reporter Jim Truitt took the guesswork out of working for LIFE. They asked a clairvoyant horse in Virginia, whether her story would be in LIFE. With her unerring faculty for divining the truth, she spelled out "Yes" (left) in addition to providing the other answers shown on pages 20, 21.

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