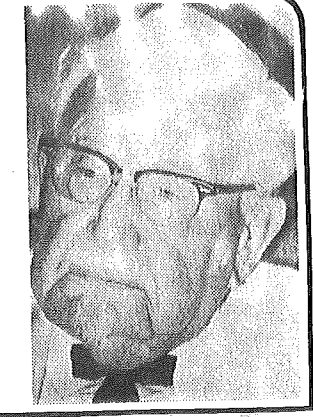
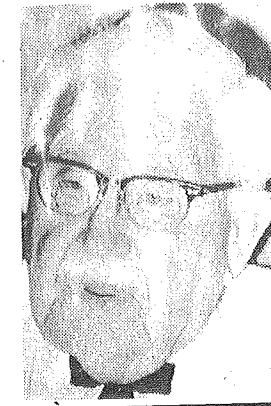


a v.i.p. and me

(very interesting person)

By KATHLEEN A. HICKS



I have no hobbies at all, and I am not interested in sports. The only thing I am interested in is food, and if I have some time off I'll work on a recipe — that's my hobby. I am getting ready now to publish a cookbook within the next year of recipes that I can vouch for being good, don't you see?

COLONEL HARLAND SANDERS: ORIGINATOR OF KENTUCKY FRIED CHICKEN FOUNDER — HARLAND SANDERS CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

ME: Having been born in Indiana, what took you to Corbin, Kentucky, and into the restaurant and motel business there in 1930?

COL. SANDERS: When I was 15 years old, I left Indiana and did a variety of jobs for the bigger part of my life. Then I was in business in Nicklesville, Kentucky, and the drought hit the country and the farmers had to sell their sheep and their stock because there was no water available. The city had to haul its water in tank cars from the rural areas some 100 miles away. I had credited out all my money in gasoline, garage work and supplies to these farmers and they couldn't pay me. Then the oil company wanted to build me a station at Corbin, rent free. So I went down to Corbin and took advantage of their offer.

ME: Going from a rags-to-riches existence, what memories remain with you from your earlier days when money was a problem?

COL. SANDERS: I think it behooves one to acquire to be mindful of what all has happened during a lifetime. In my 83 years, there has been lots of changes — many ups and downs. There is nothing really distressful to tell about those days. I was born poor and more or less stayed poor until I had a fairly successful restaurant business. There was quite a problem for my widowed mother. My father died when I was five years old, my little brother was three and my sister was born a couple of months after papa died. I was raised on this poor Indiana farm by a widowed mother; at the age of 10 she got me a job with a neighbor farmer about a mile away for \$2 a month and my board. I was such a no-account, he fired me the first month. When I took my money home and told my mother Mr. Norris had fired me, she gave me a tongue-lashing, saying what on earth was I ever going to amount to, her oldest boy, the only one she had to look to for any help, for her dependance, and to think I was such a no-account that I couldn't hold a job for \$2 a month. I took it to heart so deeply, I felt as low as a snake's belly; I made a resolution then, and that resolution sticks with me yet today, that if I

ever got a job, no matter how much work or what hours it was or what the pay was, I was going to do the very best there was in me.

ME: Until the re-routing of the state highway near your restaurant occurred, you were destined to be in the restaurant business the rest of your life. Tell me the frustrations that took place at the onset of the highway until your Kentucky Fried Chicken first became popular.

COL. SANDERS: Chances are yes, I would have, I am a person who doesn't frustrate, so I had no frustrations at all: it was merely a matter of deciding about franchising and analyzing the possibility of my chicken making a success. And that is what we did. We tried to sell our building at private sale at a decent price, but everybody else knew the highway

was changing and nobody wanted to pay that much for it. So finally we sold it at auction and took just what the bidder gave, which was just enough to straighten out my accounts. I didn't find it disappointing, because I was looking to the future. Napoleon Hill made the statement way back in his earlier days, that every business failure has a good cause in it; it can be used as a stepping stone for something better. So in my mind, I thought, What is that stepping stone? It would be my chicken. And how did I arrive at that being good? Beverly Osborne of Oklahoma City had come out 30 years ago with a chicken product called "chicken in the rough"; well, it was too rough to be called chicken, and yet he had made a couple of million dollars out of it. So the wife and I said, if he can make money out of that stuff he had, then we were bound to make good on ours. So we resolved that we would just work Indiana and Ohio, two states right close to us. They had lots of good industry towns, and there was a good possibility of getting it into the restaurants that would average us \$10 a month each. I had to travel and sleep in my car, but if I had gotten discouraged, I couldn't have done anything. You have to be optimistic and have faith and honesty in what you are doing.

ME: Not many men set out at 66 in search of a new career. What was behind the confidence in yourself and your chicken recipe?

COL. SANDERS: I had a good product and I knew it. I had been using this in my restaurant for 16 years — there wasn't any guesswork in what I was doing — and I knew how the public liked it. Of course, it started slow. I had help, I had a responsibility, and I never believe in retiring. I had no doubt about it.

ME: How does a person start to franchise a product he has faith in?

COL. SANDERS: The way I begun, I loaded a case of chickens in an ice chest in the back of the car, a 50-pound lard can full of my seasoned flour and my special cooker. Then I would go to a restaurant and tell the owner that I had an unusually good product and I would demonstrate it for him and his employees. I wanted them to say it was the best they had ever eaten; then they put it on the menu and let the public enjoy it. And every place that we put it in, it was a success and business increased. And salesmen spread a lot of good news from one place to another and I would hear from other restaurants who would want to franchise. It just kept multiplying; all mostly on a handshake.

ME: How long did you experiment with herbs and spices until you hit on the right full-flavored combination?

COL. SANDERS: That didn't take any time, scarcely a day or two. Then I thought I had the perfect thing — it was just great. But there was one more ingredient that I wanted to put in, but I was afraid to in case I spoiled the trade that I had. Then one day, I had an order for \$500 worth of chicken for a boat trip that was coming up to Cumberland Falls. I thought, well, those people aren't my regular customers. I am going to fix the chicken up with this and see what it will

do. So I put it in the flour and stirred it up with the other seasonings; I tried the first piece out of the cooker, and it was the best I had ever eaten. It has remained the same to this day.

ME: Do you supply the secret seasoning or give each franchise holder the recipe?

COL. SANDERS: Not one of them knows it, and there are over 5,000 outlets. We supply the seasoning and they add it to their flour. I have it in a safety deposit box and the people who blend the spices for me are under bond and they have to keep the secret. I don't think it will ever be revealed because

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too many people have got big investments in their places of business that are relying on the success of their franchise.

ME: You came to Canada in 1955 and began the first of a chain of Kentucky Fried Chicken outlets in Vancouver, British Columbia. Being a U.S. citizen, why did you sell out your United States operation in 1964?

COL. SANDERS: Well, I was 74 years old and I didn't have anybody to succeed me to run the company for my wife and two daughters in case I died, so it just seemed like the most logical thing to do because at 74 you really don't know if you are going to live much longer or not. So I figured that was the best thing to do.

ME: The Canadian Kentucky Fried Chicken Company was incorporated as a charitable foundation for the assisting of young Canadians through college. What brought about such a decision and what standards have to be maintained to qualify for scholarships?

COL. SANDERS: I gave the whole stock six million dollar outfit to this foundation that I called the Harland Sanders Charitable Foundation. My wife, Claudia, and I incorporated it and then all the profits that come from chicken now, outside of the mere operating expense which is negligible, is

divided between all the public through the franchisee in every town; he sends in a list of the charities or scholarships that he would like to have his cheque made out to. I came to this decision because if I died Uncle Sam would have reached into my estate and took 53 per cent immediately. The remaining 43 per cent would have to be sold off to pay the tax on the 53 and then the whole thing would have been down the drain. As for the scholarships, I leave that to the colleges. If I tried to handle the scholarship applications myself, I would have to maintain an office, secretary and investigation organization in order to evaluate. My part of it goes to the college, and then the college knows the status of the scholar; they know whether he is studious, ambitious and worthy of it and knows something of the person's background. The only qualification I ask is that the person be an abstainer and non-smoker. If someone starts smoking when he is on scholarship, it is immediately cut off. I don't have money to burn and I am not going to let someone else burn my money. It's for youngsters who want an education and about \$700,000 has been given out in scholarships across Canada since it began.

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'I heard someone say, "That's the Chicken man."

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ME: Besides your home here, you have an estate near Louisville, Kentucky, and a home in Miami, Florida. Why do you keep up three residences?

COL. SANDERS: My wife has a restaurant of her own in Kentucky called, "Claudia's Restaurant -- Wife of the Kentucky Colonel". We enjoy our lovely home there; this house is like a doll house to us compared to the one in Kentucky. We sold the home in Miami about five years ago. We had it for about five years and we were robbed twice. The Miami Herald brought out a full-page section showing an aerial picture of the town with 15 places marked off where the Mafia lived, and one lived not too far from us. We weren't home the first time we got robbed, but the second time, I came in about four in the morning and went to bed. And between 4:30 and 6 o'clock, someone broke into the house and robbed me of a few hundred dollars. Of course, my wife was scared. Just two week before that they had found a man and wife shot in bed, which could have happened to us if we had waked up. So I don't want anything more to do with Miami, Florida, now or anytime hereafter.

ME: You have built a Salvation Army Citadel, a Boy Scout Hall, adopted 78 orphans, and donated to many hospitals (Mississauga, Queensway are two). What satisfaction do you get from having a philanthropist's heart?

COL. SANDERS: People are human beings, it's just natural to want to help someone. There is no sense in being the richest man in the cemetery — you can't do any business in there at all. And when you die Uncle Sam is going to take a big part of what you've got, so you have to be frugal enough and try to make a few preparations for your own old age: and above that, you don't need anything, but there are a lot of people who do need it. I have been a Shriner for 35 years, and just this year I gave \$24,000 to one of the Shriners' Crippled Children's Hospitals and \$12,000 to another one. Now what could be better than the charity work the foundation is doing?

ME: "Most of all, I love the children," is your favorite quote. Having a great love for children and sharing a special rapport with them, can you recall an incident or two that has occurred with your little friends who call you "The Chicken Man"?

COL. SANDERS: I can't recall any specific incident, they are all just great; children are the greatest things in the world. I have dozens and dozens of kids from all over the country who write me and send their drawings. When they know I am coming to town, they come to the store and hand me their letters. I had two little tots, five and six years old, give me their drawings on this last trip. I sure appreciate it, too. Children are the only people you can get the absolute

truth out of. They are always living in anticipation and are so anxious to learn: more so today than ever.

ME: You have had many antonyms attributed to you: dramatic and simple; religious and profane; patient and demanding; quiet and loud; voluble and a good listener. Do you have any favorites you attribute to yourself?

COL. SANDERS: I guess the best attribute you could say about me is, I am industrious — and modestly intelligent. I was a sixth-grade drop-out in school, but I've come a long way since then, don't you see? I think a person should be sincere — integrity is one of the greatest things.

ME: "My Mug is my trademark," is one of your sayings. What has all this popularity done for you as a person?

COL. SANDERS: It hasn't changed me at all. I just live from day to day and look at everyone the same and hope that they think of me the same way. If I am autographing for a bunch of people some place and someone will say, "Come on, Colonel, your plane's just about to go." I still write until I get the last one — I just can't snub anybody or turn them down. I wouldn't disappoint them for anything in the world. (I can vouch for this. I telephoned Colonel Sanders at 4 p.m. and he had just arrived from Vancouver at 2. He gave me a 7 o'clock appointment even though he was only going to be in Mississauga for 24 hours. So a special thanks to a special man for giving me the opportunity of doing this column for you.)