

And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.—Luke 2:7.

What babe new born is this that in a manger cries? Near on her lowly bed his happy mother lies. Oh, see the air is shaken with white and heavenly wings— This is the Lord of all the earth, this is the King of Kings. —R. W. Gilder.

FIVE STARS, ONE GOLD

As The Tribune almost daily records casualties, we have to muster all the restraint we possess in order to refrain from penning a tribute to each gallant soldier or sailor who has given his life for his country. Although we have not done so, we want every reader to know we have it in our hearts to speak out the sorrow we share with the families who have sustained these losses. It is simply because we do not know what to say that will be helpful that we have not spoken up.

But today we can restrain ourselves no longer. There is a fine American home on First street north in the city of Wisconsin Rapids displaying a service flag with five stars. These stars were all blue. Now a gold star will shine brilliantly in that noble flag. It will be for First Lt. Charles Ellis Jr., a valiant officer who paid with his life on the field of battle.

We feel sure the Ellis family will have the united sympathy of this community, for not only has Lieutenant Charles made the supreme sacrifice but there is that awful uncertainty about another, Lt. Donald Ellis, reported missing in action. Five fine young men have gone forth from this home to risk their lives for God and for country. One dead and another missing and three more to carry on the fight against the foe. Words simply fail us as we search for something to say that will bring comfort to this bereaved home and to people of this community who know this splendid American family. We have watched these boys grow up, gain their education the hard way and then become solid, valuable citizens. Their passing is not only a deep personal family loss but a genuine community loss as well.

What we have said here today must not be dimmed by omitting the names of all the others from our community who gave their lives in this global conflict, for we want to let it be a matter of record that each one, irrespective of his rank and responsibility, has earned the fullest measure of respect for the unselfish price he has paid for our safety and protection. The debt we owe our soldier dead and those who have suffered wounds of battle can never be repaid. All we can do is to bow our heads in humble and reverent thanks to each and every one.

LAW AND THE PRESS

A new one for the bookshelf is "Legal Control of the Press," written by Frank Thayer, who is professor of journalism at the University of Wisconsin and also is a member of the Illinois state bar.

Mr. Thayer not only presents a volume of value to newspapers and newspapermen but devotes considerable space to such subjects as the historical background of the press and its qualified right to freedom of expression, as guaranteed by the constitution. By way of introduction to his guide on "What to Do Until the Lawyer Comes," Mr. Thayer says:

"Newspapers unfettered and unafraid insure the principles of democratic government. In the United States and component states there are guarantees of a free press, but any serious student of journalism and government realizes the relativity of such guarantees. There are restraints upon the newspaper and periodical press, as well as upon the radio. The various means of thought communication have rights, but these rights may be abused and so cease in particular cases to be rights or privileges.

"Fields for regulation of the press are legion, for certain legislative minds are alert to find new restrictions, and additional means of augmenting public funds. Sinister attempts by some officials and some advertisers have been made; consideration of such attempted controls lies, however, in the realms of ethics and business policy. Potential and actual controls of the press exist, but such controls do not necessarily mean contaminated, grasping, or dishonest influences.

"Legal controls serve as a protection to the press as an institution of honest news portrayal and fair comment upon public affairs. Laws regulate conduct and establish rights. The press needs the protection established through these controls in order to function as a private business for the public interest."

The War Today BY DEWITT MACKENZIE

The great German drive out of the Rhineland bears the earmarks of being a colossal gamble in an effort to disrupt allied plans for an offensive and so achieve an indefinite delay out of which Berlin hopes might grow a compromise peace.

Speculation at this juncture regarding the immediate future of the attack should be cautious, since the security news blackout imposed by the allied high command leaves us without sufficient facts upon which to base a studied judgment. Taking a longer range view, however, we can say that allied superiority in manpower and material insures our victory. Therefore, while it would be folly to regard the situation lightly, there certainly is no occasion for developing "nerves."

We have plenty of precedent to show how far a battle-front can bend without suffering disaster. For example, your columnist was right in the path of the final German tornado of 1918 in the valley of the Somme on the British front. This was the time, you will recall, when Field Marshal Haig issued his famous "backs to the wall" order of the day to his armies. That was the Kaiser's final fling, and it all but crashed through—but the allied line held.

Could Be Dying Effort I'm not suggesting the present situation is as bad as was that in the spring of 1918, but there are similarities. The beautiful thought about the Somme show is that it was there the Kaiser broke his back. The same thing could easily happen to the Germans in the present battle.

The way it looks to me now, one of two things is likely to happen: Either Nazi Field Marshal Von Rundstedt is going to achieve his object of upsetting allied plans so that the war will drag along, or he's going to get the beating of his life.

The German commander (and don't let anybody tell you he isn't a capable soldier) is flinging into this battle all the resources available—infantry, the long inactive luftwaffe, masses of tanks, and even paratroops. Along with that he has massed much heavy artillery—and he's being aided by a mysterious new V weapon which apparently is being used wholesale along the front. The allied command is silent as to the exact nature or efficacy of this weapon, which presumably is some type of flying bomb or rocket—either of which can be plenty nasty.

In short, the German high command may have decided to make this offensive the decisive battle in the west, instead of waiting for it to be staged on the open plain of Cologne just west of the Rhine. It's a great and dangerous gamble, but it's difficult to criticize the decision as an act of desperation.

Nazis Had Little Alternative The Nazi alternative wasn't attractive in any way. As explained in yesterday's column, Von Rundstedt has been sitting in a huge trap along the western Rhineland. Eisenhower had continued to tighten his lines and improve his positions until he apparently was about ready to swing a haymaker that would put his first army across the Roer river, inaugurate a turning movement against the German line to the north, and precipitate the battle of the Cologne plain.

That Cologne plain, which would enable the allies to employ the full strength of their armor over the open, rolling countryside, was a potential death-trap for Von Rundstedt. To be sure, the Germans have strong defenses on the east bank of the Rhine, but there was no assurance that the field marshal would be able to withdraw any considerable portion of his forces across the Rhine while under heavy attack.

The alternative was to take the initiative against the allies. Instead of waiting for disaster, Von Rundstedt has gone hunting it.

SO THEY SAY!

For all the assistance when the barbarous enemy was crowding our northern islands we shall remain eternally thankful and sight of the British battle fleet in these waters will not cause forgetfulness of its forerunner, the Stars and Stripes.—Sydney, Australia, Herald.

Before the take-off the briefing officers tell you how to get back to the base if you happen to bail out over China, but if you have to bail out over Japan—well, you're strictly on your own.—Lt. Thomas B. Friedman of Cleveland, O., B-29 flyer back from China.

For us at home there is a supreme responsibility—to keep faith with the men in our armed forces. The purchase of extra War Bonds during the Sixth War Loan is little enough to ask.—Secretary of State Edward R. Stettinius jr.

The Red army is undoubtedly the most powerful and one of the best trained armies in the world.—Maj.-Gen. G. Isayeff, Soviet general staff.

Nazi Germany is hoping to win an eight-month respite mainly by employing 16-ton rocket bombs and jet-driven planes—for which they have not a sufficient number of pilots—but even the Germans no longer believe she can.—Former member German legation in Berne, Switzerland.

BARBS

Buying War Bonds is just a matter of dollars and sense!

Mussolini was reported dead some time ago; now he's reported ill. What has happened is enough to make him turn over, but not come back to life.

Cold shots are worthless, a medical group has concluded. The same is true of a lot of so-called "hot shots."

German and Jap rulers are in grave danger—the kind with a little white marker on top.

New York butchers are about ready to close up shop for a while. Anyone gets tired of just saying "Sorry," or "No!"

VIEWS OF PRESS

COMMENDABLE PROJECT The Wisconsin Historical society proposes to publish during the next few years a series of biographies devoted to the great citizens of Wisconsin's past; politicians, explorers, businessmen, teachers, clergymen, agriculturists and others. A list of 14 candidates for such full volume sketches has already been drawn up, and it extends from Claude Allouez, the Jesuit explorer, to Gen. Billy Mitchell, military aviation pioneer. The project is a commendable one, for Wisconsin history is incomplete without biographies of the men whose leadership and vision and pioneering made this state what it is. That the work will be competently done is assured by its sponsorship.—Antigo Journal.

They've Now Joined Up With the Enemy



Germans Slay Helpless Yanks

BY HAL BOYLE

An American Frontline Clearing Station, Belgium—(Delayed)—(P)—Weeping with rage, a handful of doughty survivors described today how a German tank force ruthlessly poured machine gun fire into a group of about 150 Americans who had been disarmed and herded into a field in the opening hours of the present Nazi counteroffensive.

"We had to lie there and listen to German non-coms kill with pistols every one of our wounded men who groaned or tried to move," said T-5 William B. Summers, of Glenville, W. Va., who escaped by playing dead.

The Americans were members of an artillery observation battalion ambushed and trapped at a road fork by a powerful German armored column of Tiger tanks, whose heavy guns quickly shot up the two dozen American trucks and lightly-armored vehicles.

Had to Surrender There were no heavy weapons in the American column and the entire observation unit quickly had to surrender.

"We were just moving up to take over a position at the top of a hill and as we got to the road intersection they opened up on us," said Summers.

"They had at least 15 to 20 tanks. They disarmed us and then searched us for wristwatches and anything else they wanted.

"I guess we were lined up along that road for a full hour. They then stood us all together in an open field. I thought something was wrong. As we were standing there one German soldier moving past in a tank column less than 50 yards away pulled out a pistol and emptied it on our fellows."

A grimy soldier sitting in the little room here with Summers ran his hands through muddied hair and broke into sobs. There were tears in Summers' eyes as he went on:

Unbelievable Slaughter "Then they opened up on us from their armored cars with machine-guns. We hadn't tried to run away or anything. We were just standing there with our hands up and they tried to murder us all. And they did murder a lot of us.

"There was nothing to do but flop and play dead."

"I never saw such slaughter before in this war," said Pvt. William F. Geem of Elizabethtown, Pa.

"They were cutting us down like guinea pigs. Then those German non-coms began walking around knocking off our wounded. I kept my head down, but after they had emptied their pistols I could hear them click fresh cartridges in their hands while they were reloading. Then they went on looking for more of our fellows to shoot."

"We just hoped and prayed while we lay there listening to them shoot every man that moved," said T-5 Charles F. Appman, Box 186, Verona, Pa.

Less than 20 Left The survivors lay in tense, rigid silence in the freezing mud. For an hour before cautious glances showed all the Germans had moved away except one Tiger tank.

"It wasn't more than 100 yards away, but we decided we had to make a break for it then or never," said T-5 Harold W. Billow of Mount Joy, Pa. "We jumped up and scattered for the woods. The tank opened up on us, but I don't think it got many that time."

Three hours after the slaughter fewer than 20 survivors had made their way back to the American lines.

Jack Belden, of Time magazine, and I rode back to this clearing station with the first survivors picked up by our reconnaissance jeeps.

ALEUTIANS ARE SIBERIA TO TREE EXPERT

An Aleutian Island Base—(P)—Even before Mt. Cleveland volcano on Chuginadak island spouted rocks and lava at him, Sgt. William Biggers of Chapel Hill, N. C., felt out of place. He came into the Army after being graduated from the University of North Carolina with a degree in forestry. The Aleutians are treeless.

OUR MEN IN SERVICE

LEAVES FROM A WAR CORRESPONDENT'S NOTEBOOK

BY FRANKLIN BANKER (Substituting for Hal Boyle)

A U. S. Fighterbomber Base in Belgium—(Delayed)—(P)—Gritting their teeth against the rain and icy winds of Belgium and France, men of the Ninth air force are getting set for winter by building little communities of shacks out of whatever material they can lay their hands on—usually captured from the Germans.

Boys at the Lightning base commanded by Col. Clinton C. Wassen, Route 1, Dover, Ohio, getting wind of a big German lumber depot near Metz, sent seven trucks. Cheers went up when the convoy returned from the 250-mile round trip with enough prefabricated building parts to construct a mess hall, hospital headquarters and other huts.

Staff Sgt. William O. Orr, Mount Sinai, N. Y., directed construction with the aid of captured blue-prints.

"We found that Belgian impressed labor had taken pains to fix the Germans up by designing beams that didn't fit, putting notches in the wrong place and leaving out certain panels," Orr said.

Were Promised Pass Wallowing in mud up to two feet deep, they kept trying hammers with alacrity through almost daily rain because the base executive officer, Lt. Col. Harry L. Wackman, of The Dalles, Ore., promised them a pass in the nearby town when they were finished.

Most living quarters are pyramidal tents and the Yanks have been busy boarding up the sides and laying wooden floors.

Instead of the usual four-foot walls, an enterprising trio built a wall six feet high with a canvas tent over the top. On the first floor there is a small bar, desk, chairs, lounge and even a sink with faucets attached to a tank outside. A ladder leads up to "second floor" sleeping quarters.

Few of these boys make any sincere complaints about the mud and cold. They just look around and try to improve their lot. For example members of an antiaircraft battery found themselves a little trailer about the size of a Toonerville trolley which used to belong to a couple

of German officers. This they converted into a warm and dry "mess hall."

Pvt. John Louis Hodgden, Jr., son of Mrs. Luella Hodgden, 331 1/2 West Grand avenue, has reported at Keesler Field's unit of the army air force's training command for reassignment to new military duties. He will remain at Keesler Field, Bitoxi, Miss., for a short period of time until his new assignment is determined on the basis of a review of his previous training, aptitudes and experience, together with consideration of the military needs of the army.

William A. Schmit, husband of Mrs. Leona Schmit, Route 5, Wisconsin Rapids, has been advanced to the rating of motor machinist's mate, third class. He is in training with the United States Atlantic fleet, amphibious training base, Little Creek, Va.

The seaman entered the navy at Great Lakes, Ill., in April, 1944, and was transferred to Little Creek, July 1.

Willis Winchell, S 2-c, of Adams, has been transferred into the quartermaster service school at Great Lakes, Ill.

Stanley Lepak, former grade school principal at Adams, was recently promoted to the rank of sergeant at his base somewhere in India.

Pvt. Harold D. Adams, son of Mr. and Mrs. Ray Williams, Friendship, has arrived at Camp Chaffee, Ark., where he is assigned to the 16th armored division's 64th armored infantry battalion.

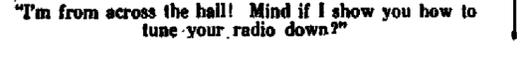
Harold York, son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles York, Adams, has been promoted from corporal to sergeant. He is stationed in New York.

Receive Second Citation S-Sgt. Donald C. Rucinski, son of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Rucinski, 241 Twelfth avenue, is serving as an ammunition workers with a heavy bombardment group, which recently was awarded a second war department citation for outstanding performance in the Mediterranean theater of operations.

He is now authorized to wear an Oak Leaf cluster on his Distinguished Unit badge. This second citation was for a daring and successful attack on the Concordia Vega oil refinery at Ploesti, Rumania. The first was for an attack on the rail yards at Bucharest, Rumania, during

of German officers. This they converted into a warm and dry "mess hall."

FUNNY BUSINESS BY HERSHBERGER



Six Nominees as Assistants To Secretary Stettinius Give Good Accounts of Themselves

BY PETER EDSON

The senate foreign relations committee combined greater three ring third degree show and investigation of President Roosevelt's six nominations for assistant secretaries of state couldn't have turned out better from the department of state standpoint if it had been arranged by one of the department's own press agents—pardon—current information specialists.

The six characters in search of confirmation, the six men "accused" of having been nominated as assistants to Secretary of State Ed Stettinius, all gave splendid accounts of themselves and came through clean.

In addition, the senate's public exhibition served to put all six of the nominees in the limelight, gave them a publicity build-up of inestimable value, made the names of Grew, Clayton, Dunn, Holmes, Rockefeller, and McLeish much better known than they were before, served to spread on the record their achievements and views, cleared the air of a lot of malicious misinformation, and in general did the department of state no end of good in making its reorganization, needs, aims and policies matters of common knowledge.

There is another aspect of the senate's little pre-Christmas probing party which does not look so good. By comparison with performances of the six nominees, performances of the senators themselves were nothing to shout about.

Now this is a matter of some concern. Get the picture. The foreign relations committee is perhaps the most important committee in the senate. In the days ahead its responsibilities for shaping the future of the world will be tremendous.

As such, its should have the best minds in the senate, the most searching intellects, men of clearest vision, men who can rise above trivialities. Granting that some of the senators

were rightly opposed to any public inquiry of the president's nominees for top jobs in the state department and may have refrained from asking embarrassing questions for that reason, did the senate foreign relations committee members who did speak up conduct themselves in such a way as to reflect only credit on their group?

It was good cross-examination when Senator Guffey of Pennsylvania asked former Ambassador Grew if he favored leaving Hirohito in power after defeat of Japan. The same goes for Senator Murray's asking James C. Dunn about his attitude towards Franco and it was equally enlightening to have Senator Pepper ask General Holmes to clear up the part he played in dealings between Robert Murphy and the French in North Africa.

And on the Other Hand— But consider the spectacle of Sen. Henrik Shipstead of Minnesota asking Secretary Stettinius to "Explain what our foreign policy is?" and asking Grew to "Give us your definition of diplomacy."

What do you make of Sen. James Tunnell of Delaware asking Grew to give a definition of a "Liberal?" To what purpose did Sen. Hiram Johnson of California ask Jimmy Dunn where the Atlantic Charter was now? Johnson then got further tangled up by inferring that the four freedoms were part of the Atlantic charter, and had to be set straight by the man he questioned.

Does Senator Murray really believe the U. S. state department is under domination of Churchill and the British foreign office, as he inferred in his questioning of Dunn? Sen. Bennett Champ Clark, of Missouri, introducing an utterly frivolous autobiographical sketch of Archibald MacLeish, merely defeated his own end by cheapening the whole performance.

In summary, the investigation gave a chance to look at not only the assistant secretaries but also it gave a good close look at the senate foreign relations committee. If the latter was perhaps the less inspiring sight, in that respect the investigation backfired.

An investigation of the senate foreign relations committee by the proposed Secretariat in the department of state would have been interesting.

Flashes of Life

Wishing Billings, Mont.—(P)—Cpl. Rudy Hole of Wheeler, Mont., sent his draft board a V-mail Christmas cheer from "somewhere in India."

He addressed them: "My Dear Draft Board," and informed them he was working on the Ledo road near Burma. He added this postscript: "Wish you were here."

Hungry Goat Evanston, Ill.—(P)—Until the owner of a hungry billy goat claims him, he's got to lead a dog's life in the city bourne.

John Borre, city dog warden, caught the stray billy after reports to police said the goat appeared to be eating tires on parked automobiles. Borre put the goat in a private cell at the pound but it quickly broke out, joined the dogs in the compound and ate all the dog rations in the bins. Then Borre locked the goat in a stronger cell, with iron bars.

FISH HARVEST IN VICTORY GARDEN Riverside, Conn.—(P)—Victory Gardeners with "green thumbs" like to boast about their giant cabbages, tomatoes, and pumpkins, but an amphibious gardener here catches bass from his garden.

Andrew S. Wing, secretary of the National Victory Garden Institute, was hoisting his community plot when a fish began jumping on the adjacent pond. He armed himself with a fly rod. A few casts netted a black bass.

Private Breger Abroad By Dave Breger



"Sir, I would like to point out that over three years ago I started my military career at the bottom, and I'm still there!"