

# Truxtun Tragedy Hits County Family; Julius Rude Jr. Was Victim

The fateful telegram comes from the U. S. navy. . . . And there is an emptiness in the home, but a proud calm, too, and moments of silence follow moments of small talk as the family lingers over memories of the lost one.

Thus it was at the home of a dead hero this morning—the home of

**Julius Rude Jr.**, near Biron. He only 20, was among the men aboard the destroyer Truxtun as the fierce seas of the North Atlantic pounded her to pieces off Newfoundland.

## First County Fatality

The Rude home was the first in Wood county to feel the emptiness left by the grim demand of war.

But there is no bitterness, no out-crying against the destiny that singled Junior Rude out for the supreme sacrifice. His mother, tearful but with high pride, said, simply, of her son: "Boys do not come much nicer than Junior."

The home is heavy with memories of him. Sisters and brothers tell little bits about him—things he did and said that are precious to them now. His letters are all there, cheerful, gay letters; his picture is there, and his dog, "Molly," and the row of pines he planted on the Rude farm for a shelterbelt when he was a 4-H club member, and the other intimate possessions of the typical American rural boy.

Last Letter Feb. 15

"Must hurry this as leaving in about half an hour," wrote Junior from Boston in his last letter to his family, dated February 15. "I don't know where we are going or when we will be back . . . I saw Louisiana Purchase . . . I was going to call, too . . . must leave you now as I have to get on the oil barge."

Junior's father had asked him to telephone home before he left. But, as the letter indicates, his liberty period ended before he could make the call, and so the hasty, boyish letter ending, "Love to all," was the final word.

His companions of school days recall Junior in the conflicting way they would of a typical American boy. Some remember him as a quiet, retiring lad, but those who were his special friends knew him as one who liked a good time, liked dancing and schiefkopf and movies.

## Was Good Student

In his high school days here, Junior was a good student. He enjoyed games and athletics, but the six-mile trip home each afternoon after school hours gave him little opportunity to participate. He tried out for the track team and boxed in the intramural program, and was an especially adept gymnast.

Classmates recall him as a good student in English and science, and his liking for machinery led him into the navy. Junior entered the navy.

See—JULIUS RUDE JR.—Page 7



FIRST FATALITY — Julius Rude Jr., second class fireman, above, was one of the victims of the Truxtun disaster. Son of Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Rude, Wisconsin Rapids, R. I., he was the first man from Wood county to lose his life in the Second World war.

## SEE ZERO HOUR NEAR FOR JAVA

Batavia, N. E. I.—(AP)—Urged by the governor-general of the Dutch East Indies to face the foe with "faith and an iron will," the allied defenders of Java neared the zero hour today in the battle for this last bulwark blocking the Japanese from the vital united nations supply lines in the Indian ocean.

There was no new official word on the situation in southern Sumatra and in Bali, where the invaders have wrested their latest footholds directly west and east of this island straddled in the face of stubborn opposition from outnumbered defense forces.

## Jap Planes Hit at Java

A brief Indies high command communique reported only fresh aerial blows at Java, the heaviest of which was aimed at military objectives around Bandung. Dutch

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## Julius Rude jr.

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practically by accident. In January, 1941, he went to Stevens Point—"just for the ride" he explained to his family—when a friend, Cliff Borchert, was to be examined by a navy recruiter.

Still half in fun, Junior took the recruiting tests, and passed. That gave him the impetus which took him a few days later to Oshkosh and enlistment. He was inducted at Great Lakes Naval Training station and went on to the special training school at the Ford Motor company's River Rouge plant. He finished there last August as a second class fireman, and was assigned to the Truxton. His last furlough was at Thanksgiving time when he spent 10 days with his family.

"He Loved the Navy"

"When Junior signed up it wasn't as serious then. But if he had been at home when war broke out, I am sure he would have gone right in it," said his mother. "He loved the navy and I am sure he did his work well. Only last week he finished his examinations for first class fireman."

Arrangements for a memorial service have not been made, pending further word from the navy.

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