

SECOND THOUGHTS

By javie aiche

It isn't the snow; it's the stupidity. Neighbors long since have been aware of my sedentary habits and they should be able to guess that my attacks upon recurrent storms of an early-starting winter are a matter of necessity. Necessity is the mother of invention, not only; it also is the...

SAFETY VALVE

You Can't Print That . . .

It was with infinite sadness I read this morning that I, with my mild mannered little wife, and in company with such meek and humble gentlemen as James Hennihan and Joseph Walsh have been put into an association with a ferocious fellow like the Reverend Martyn Keeler to persecute Wilkes-Barre's greatest war hero and a man beside whom the late Rufus Choate pales as a member of the bar.

Naturally only one barrister could fit this description. I have searched the biographies of Choate, William Travers Jerome and the late Abe Hummel and not one of these attorneys could lay before the court of posterity so brilliant a record for the repossession of ice boxes, radios, beds and babies' cradles from the grasping, domineering, arrogant people who buy on the instalment plan, as Mr. Robert J. Doran, former chairman of the Americanism Committee of the American Legion, Chairman of the National Defense Committee of the Wyoming Valley Chamber of Commerce, member of the Executive Committee of the County Council of the Office of Civilian Defense, Chairman of Local Draft Board No. 9, member of the Veterans' Commission of the State of Pennsylvania and Chairman of the Wyoming Valley Chapter of the American Red Cross.

It is perhaps true that the Reverend Martyn Keeler makes it his practice to throw lions to the Christians, a form of brutality which is hereby called to the attention of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals but that Mrs. Weitzenkorn who even wears mourning for the death of a rosebud would put a man who so valiantly attacked that hotbed of learning, the Ostrerhout Free Library, upon the rack of torture, so disturbed me that I was unable to finish my matutinal devotions before threatening her with divorce.

"Did you know, Mrs. Weitzenkorn," I shouted in spite of the lingering affect upon me of the 22nd Psalm, "that you are accused of persecuting Wilkes-Barre's greatest lawyer and a man who was twice wounded in the first World War?" I could see her lip quiver. "Where was he wounded?" she asked trying to keep back the tears. "Where? Where? Why what the hell does it matter where?" I was clearly out of control. "Suppose he was only wounded in the foot?" "You said two wounds," she sobbed.

"Very well, two wounds. Do you just at scars who never felt a wound, Madame? Suppose Mr. Doran were wounded as Uncle Toby was wounded in the Battle of Flanders? Would you not then let the sweet tears of pity drench your iron soul? Suppose he were only wounded in the head? Is it nothing to you that Mr. Doran has protected our hearths and homes from that fenish Quakeress Mrs. Charles N. Loveland who tried to loosen the wild beasts of peace upon our children?"

She fell upon her knees, supplicating. "Where was Uncle Toby wounded?" she asked clasping her hands. I could not answer so indelicate a question. "Don't change the subject," I said coldly. "I wish to know if you are persecuting the former chairman of the Americanism Committee of the American Legion, the Chairman of the National Defense Committee of the Wyoming Valley Chamber of Commerce." A horrible fear came into my breast. "Madame, are you by any chance, and secretly, also persecuting the Wyoming Valley Chamber of Commerce?"

"No, believe me," she begged. "Nor the American Legion?" "No, no, a thousand noes!" "Are you persecuting Local Draft Board No. 9?" "Oh, no!" "The American Red Cross?" She lifted her ninety pounds proudly. "Would you believe that of me?" I was shaken. But I hid my emotion. "Madame, do you associate with Presbyterian clergymen who persecute book burners, library purgers and people who are in favor of the 72 hour work week?" "Don't tell me," she moaned, "that the Reverend Mr. Keeler is against Adolf Hitler!" I gave up. I could only think

A Slight Misunderstanding



THE OUTPOST

Where those at home and the men and women in the armed services from the Back Mountain Region—in camps and on the fighting fronts—keep contact with their fellows throughout the world.

No Rifle This Time

Dear Editor:

I just received the December 4th issue of the Post which suddenly reminded me that I forgot to let you know of my change of address. Last Tuesday I was transferred from Paris Island, S. C., to Cherry Point, N. C. I don't expect to be here very long as I am waiting transfer to an air school.

I like to read the Post and would appreciate it very much if you would send it to my new address.

From what I have seen and heard of this station I would say it is the best in the Marine Corps. Everything is new, liberty and leaves are frequent and the chow is swell. In comparison to P. I., it is really something.

When at P. I., I used the excuse that my rifle needed cleaning to end a letter, but here I haven't any rifle so I guess I'll have to close without an excuse.

Sincerely yours,

Robert A. Ray
U. S. M. C. A. S.
A. E. S., 44-214
Cherry Point, N. C.

I got rather attached to that rifle too, Bob. Nice to hear from you again. With all Good Wishes of the Season.—Editor.

From A Lake Boy

Dear Editor:

Have just received my 4th copy of the Post, and believe me it's really great to sit down and read about all your old buddies, see what they are doing and also catch up on the home town news.

Since I left Harvey's Lake on December 8, I have had quite a bit of traveling. After being made up to look like a soldier at New Cumberland, I was sent to St. Petersburg, Florida, where I was classified, took exams to find out what I was best qualified for. From there on to Clearwater, Florida, where I received by basic training, and then to my present camp, which is at Scott Field, Illinois.

Am going to school 6 nights each week from 11 P. M. until 7 A. M., studying to be a radio operator mechanic. The course in itself is quite difficult, but have also found it very interesting, and like it a lot. The course lasts 18 weeks, and consists

that perhaps my wife was less than half witted.

"I shall have to punish you, Madame. I shall write a letter about you to the newspapers."

"They won't print it," she said, idiotically.

She didn't even comprehend the courage of the American press! Louis Weitzenkorn.

Dear Editor:

of theory and laboratory work and also code for the first 10 weeks, and from there we get experience on the practical sets which we will be using later. Am now in my 8th week of it and getting along great. Taking 25 words per minute in code, which is 9 words over the required amount necessary for graduation, so it looks like I shouldn't have much trouble in making the grade.

Have also filled out an application to go to aerial gunner's school immediately after graduation of radio school, and am counting heavy on

making it. It will mean a rating of Staff Sergeant upon graduation and, more than anything, the chance to get up there in the action which we're all waiting for. Here's hoping for the best.

No chance of getting home for the holidays as we are only given the 24th and 25th off and allowed only 40 miles from camp. Guess St. Louis, which is only 20 miles away, will be the destination for most of us. It is really a swell town. The soldiers are given every consideration. Something doing all the time at the U.S.O.—dances, parties, movies, etc. We're treated like kings. Wishing you all the merriest Christmas and happiest New Year ever, and again thanking you for the Post. Am looking forward to receiving many more of them.

Pvt. Kenneth Davis
30th T. S. S., Barr. 703
Scott Field, Illinois

Thanks for a swell letter, Kenneth. May your Christmas be a happy one in St. Louis, and your New Year a Glorious One. —Editor.

A Christmas Letter

Dear Mr. Risley:

Well here is a letter which I owed the Dallas Post for a long time. I think it's my duty to write to you and tell you how things are going just for payment for the Post we get each week. I am sending you a sort of a letter about a soldier to his mother at Xmas time and I think it expresses very well the thoughts of a soldier to his mother while away from home at Xmas time, so here it is:

You must not feel too bad about me not being home with you this Christmas, I shall be with you, Mom, in spirit. Just now I am needed somewhere else, to insure that American kids shall have THEIR Christmas good times, not only this year, but for all time. God willing, Mom, dear, I shall be back home with you and the folks NEXT Christmas, when, we all hope, the lights will be on again.

Maybe it won't seem like the same old Christmas, Mom, with me away, but no matter where I am or what I am doing, this Christmas, this heart of mine will go winging back over the miles to you, the dearest mother in all the world. Like I said, Mom, maybe I won't be there with you in person, but I shall be there in spirit.

Heads up, Mom! You're an AMERICAN MOTHER. A soldier's mother. Be proud in the

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A CHRISTMAS CAROL, 1942

By Elizabeth Langdon in the Wyoming Seminary Opinator

Marley was dead, but Scrooge rarely thought about him any more. Marley had failed miserably in his business twenty-five years ago, and Scrooge had taken up where Marley had left off. However, up to the present, Scrooge had been overwhelmingly successful.

It was quite late on Christmas Eve, and Scrooge, flanked by his guards, of course, walked briskly through the iron gateway of his gloomy house. Upon reaching the door, he paused while one of his guards stepped forward to fling it open. Quite by accident, Scrooge glanced at the massive knocker, and what he saw there caused his eyes to dilate. He could have sworn that three small dots and a dash, embraced by a large V, had flashed across it for an instant. Scrooge frowned.

"Bah, humbug," he scoffed aloud, and stalked angrily into the dreary house. Scrooge, however, was not a man to be annoyed by an imagination, and having dismissed his guards at the door of his bedchamber, entered and began pouring over some maps at his desk. The lateness of the hour and the warmth of the room, however, soon caused his head to nod with drowsiness.

The first Ghost was a short, stout man with a round, cherubic face, a very bald head, and with a large cigar in his mouth. He entered the room quite noiselessly, but Scrooge woke with a start, being of necessity a light sleeper. His hand reached for the buzzer to call the guards, but something in the visitor's face arrested him, and as always, he had his bullet-proof vest on.

"How did you get in here, and what do you want?" Scrooge demanded suspiciously. "I know who you are. You are . . ."

"I am the Ghost of Christmas Past." The phantom took a long puff on his cigar and twirled his large, black umbrella. "You have no need to fear me, Scrooge, since I am a Spirit. I would merely like to take you on a short journey."

Before he could utter protest, Scrooge was whisked out of his bedroom, out of the city and into a strange country. This last he could tell by the quietness of his surroundings. They were in a small village.

"Where am I?" demanded Scrooge in bewilderment. "And who are these people?" He pointed to a group of peasant women with kerchiefs over their heads, talking quietly among themselves. A number of them seemed to be weeping despairingly. All had the unmistakable features of Polish peasants.

"These," said the Ghost, "are but a few of the people whom you have wronged in the past five years."

Scrooge sniffed disdainfully. "If you think that I am remorseful, you are mistaken. Take me back to my country immediately."

"Be patient, Scrooge. I wish to show you a few other things beforehand."

An instant later, Scrooge found himself in another village, located on the jagged tooth of a great fjord. Fishing boats lined the wharves. Scrooge noticed that most of the fishermen were large and blond, definitely of the Scandinavian type. Here, too, was a spirit of hopelessness and resignation. At sight of Scrooge, terror, then hate, crossed the faces of the native villagers, and they fled in the opposite direction.

Scrooge was annoyed. "You need not tell me what this is, Spirit. I demand to be conducted home at once!"

"Very well," said the Ghost of Christmas Past, "but you have seen only a mere fraction of the wrongs you have done the people of the world."

By some miracle Scrooge was once more alone in his bedroom, and being too overcome by fatigue to ponder over his experience, he fell exhausted upon his bed.

Hours later, Scrooge was awakened by a rough hand on his shoulder. This time he gasped in real terror, but the apparition placed its hand over his mouth. Scrooge saw that he was a large, powerful man with bushy black hair and eyebrows, and a thick moustache. He was dressed in military garb, and a pipe was clenched between his teeth.

The Spirit uncovered Scrooge's mouth. "If you have come to kill me, Joe, I think you realize that I am very closely guarded." Scrooge was trembling visibly.

"I am the Ghost of Christmas Present," said the phantom. "I will not harm you, Scrooge. In only wish to show you a few things that are happening now. Come with me." The Ghost beckoned.

A moment later Scrooge found himself in the midst of a large city. It was late afternoon, and icy winds swept down from the north, making the cold unbearable. A bloody battle was at that moment raging in the city. Great fires were destroying the buildings, men lay dying in the streets, and cannons boomed in the distance. Scrooge noticed with distrust that large posters, bearing uncomplimentary likenesses of himself with his tiny black moustache and hair hanging over one eye, had been placed in every store window. Underneath these portraits the words "Brother of Swine" had been inscribed in Russian letters. Soldiers appeared to be running to and fro in great haste. At sight of Scrooge some stopped and saluted mechanically, while others uttered cries of triumph and lunged toward him with their bayonets poised.

"Spirit, take me away from here!" cried Scrooge frenziedly.

The next instant, Scrooge was aware of burning heat about him and sand under his feet which sharply contrasted to his previous experience. A vast desert stretched itself before them. Here again was the scene of a great battle. Observing closely, Scrooge noted that the combatants were of many different nationalities: Arabs, African Negroes, French, Egyptians, Italians, and one face which, though more closely united than any other group, seemed to be a melting pot of all nations. Scrooge noticed to his horror that the army of his own superior race seemed to be in full retreat on all fronts.

"I have seen quite enough, Spirit," Scrooge mumbled uneasily. "I—I must return to my country at once and issue orders to correct these matters." "There is one more place to which I wish to conduct you," said the Ghost.

With the speed of the wind, the apparition had transported Scrooge to a tiny house on the northern shores of the Mediterranean.

"This, my dear Scrooge," said the phantom, "is the home of the proverbial Cratchits."

However, the house appeared deserted, and Scrooge strode to the doorway and looked out on the street. It was obvious that the population here was starving. Bodies of the dead were being shoveled by the carload into wagons. Mere skeletons of people were poking through garbage cans lining the streets. Tiny, starved babies cried weakly. There certainly were no "Cratchits" to be seen. They were all out foraging for food, or dead long since. Occasionally an arrogant, well fed "Aryan" would walk through the streets and jeer at the famished populace. Scrooge stared at the scene scornfully, unemotionally.

"Starvation," said the Ghost, "makes brothers of all beings. But you . . ."

His voice trailed off, and Scrooge once more found

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