

SECOND THOUGHTS

By javie aiche

Not since they cut down the old whipping-post had I put away a souvenir. Elder members of the Durbin, VanHorn, James, Yapple and Brown families will remember the whipping-post. It was the elm tree in the front yard of the Elm Congregational Church on Main street facing Elm street. That's an elm-of-a-lot of elm, isn't it? Dike Brown's parents had their home almost next door to Cooney Hendershot's blacksmith shop, and the shop was in the shade of the elm's branches. So, when it was decided the old tree must come down for the future safety of Plymouth pedestrians there was quite a lot of ceremony about it.

I haven't the least idea what became of the souvenir. It was an inch-thick slice from one of the branches. Duly varnished it was intended that for years untold, even to the seventh generation, it would excite inquiry as to its meaning, so that its youthful possessor and those to follow after him would wax eloquent on the history of Old Shawnee, with the tree from which the souvenir was taken the last landmark of the red-man's tenacity, still accurately fixed by the stump left abait the Congregational parsonage gate.

The next souvenir presented to me was a chunk of iceberg. Captain Lemuel Edwards, of the U. S. Cruiser Birmingham, handed it to me at League Island when I sought from him the story of how the U. S. Navy had attacked but had not vanquished the frozen ghost-mountains which a few months before, in the year 1912, had sent to the bottom of the Atlantic the supposed-to-be unsinkable Titanic. That one decisive defeat in the entire history of Uncle Sam's seafaring crusaders led to the formation of the International Ice Patrol, still operating. The souvenir was put into a pan of water and we toasted the blunder of whatever Washington dumbkopf it was who sent the Navy on its chase after wild icebergs.

The best the Navy guns could do was chip off the bergs a bit at a time, the six-inch shells doing a better job than a broadside from the sixteens. Once, when the balance of a berg was changed by the chipping, it reared over, missed the Birmingham by eight inches, and everybody resumed interrupted breathing. Conservatively estimated, the berg's butt measured 217 feet under water; if it had struck the cruiser it would have been the cruiser's end. It would have been tossed out of the Atlantic ice-lanes as you might toss an egg-shell with an oar.

Then there was Babe Ruth. My job was to interview Babe on the source of his mighty power. All he could give me of information was a look at his massive shoulders. "I guess that's the source," he said. But, he did give me a baseball. He sent out for it and autographed it to the young lady then the pride of my life. It disappeared. Not only the autographed baseball disappeared, but with it went the opium pipe, fan and dagger that had been given me by Dan Cattell, the White King of Philadelphia's Chinatown, back in the days when tong wars and murders had police and reporters threading the mazes of underground Vine street and the mysteries of the House of a Thousand Rooms.

And so souvenirs went out of my life. They stayed out until I met John Maloney, in Springfield, Illinois; John, with car and a full gasoline tank, and with a Denver banker sitting beside him. The pair were on their way to New Salem and Petersburg. I was going there, too, to confirm the only good knowledge I have ever had of William Randolph Hearst. Hearst, I was told, had supplied the funds for final rehabilitation of the New Salem that Abe Lincoln knew, making possible even the wool-carding mill with the round-table engine. A brace of oxen trod the round table, the table turned a wooden shaft, and the mill worked. It still does.

Ann Rutledge's gravestone at Petersburg announces that hers and Honest Abe's was a marriage of separation and not of union; that, I suppose, being a poet's idea of a suitable epitaph for the maiden beloved by the greatest of all Americans, and by him lost to eternity. Well, the Denver banker took three leaves from the tree that shades Ann Rutledge's grave. It was a big tree and profusely vegetated. No

one would miss the leaves. At New Salem there were State Police to put into effect the warning that not so much as a blossom is to be plucked from the files of hollyhock, not a leaf from the herb garden of the village doctor who brewed and distilled his own medicines, not a twig from the plants of cotton, tobacco, hemp, peanut, broom-corn and all the diverse seedings that made the primitive community a complete entity.

"Well," said the Denver banker, "I have the three leaves from the tree that shades the grave of Ann Rutledge. I shall treasure them as long as I live, and when I die, my heirs will find that I name the leaves among the bequests I most highly regard. I wish you could be with me when I show the leaves to my wife back in Colorado. Nothing I have ever given her were so much welcomed as these will be. If I had my choice between picking up a thousand-dollar-bill in Petersburg and getting those three leaves, I'd take the leaves."

And Ed Gibbons, who also had a car and a full tank, wanted to know why I insisted on a return trip to the grave of Lincoln's lost sweetheart! I told him to wait and see. I had noticed a solitary flower on the grave, a flower that didn't belong there. It was a daisy, only a small daisy, but very sedate and distinguished-looking in its lovely sway over the moss the caretakers keep eternally green and perpetually molded to a perfect outline. Not only would the daisy not be missed; it would be eradicated when next the caretakers made their rounds.

I gathered the daisy. If three leaves from the tree over her grave-stone are worth more than a thousand dollars to a Denver banker, I figured that one daisy from the bosom of Ann Rutledge ought to be in Fred Keifer's Lincoln Alcove. I hope Fred will understand.

POET'S CORNER

When MacArthur Goes Home To Bataan

I am thinking tonight of MacArthur
And our gallant young boys o'er
the sea.
How they've fought for the fame of
Old Glory,
In fox-holes, in jungle and lea.

"I'm going back to Bataan," said
MacArthur.
And he's plowing his way through
the foam.

With his faith in the Lord, he will
make it,
How we'll cheer, when MacArthur
gets home.

There's his ship, with its prow in a
typhoon—
But his saber is drawn in his
hand—
There's our boys up on deck fighting
bravely,
And they're headed for home and
Bataan.

"I'm coming back to Bataan!" said
MacArthur;
From the Little Rock down in the
Bay.

Give me some Yanks and some guns,
we will show them—
That sneaking attacks never pay."

Oh! I am thinking of God and His
mercy—
How He hears all the prayers of
this man.

And I know He will guide and protect
him,
And lead him back home to
Bataan.

—Virginia Harding.

An Extra "Heel" to the Boot



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.

A Surprise
July 31, 1943.

Dear Editor:
I received your paper yesterday and was surprised but very happy to get it. Our family has been getting it for as long as I can remember. It is a very good weekly paper and covers so much news that a soldier a long way from home most sincerely enjoys reading it.

A soldier of yours,
Pfc. W. Montross,
Camp Carson, Colo.

• Show us the editor who isn't proud to get a friendly letter like that. Many thanks and good wishes from us.—Editor.

From Camp Shelby
July 21, 1943.

Dear Sir:
I just received a July copy of the Post and enjoyed and appreciated it very much. It sure is good to hear news of my friends in the Back Mountain region.

I am a mechanic in the Motor Pool and sure do enjoy my work as it follows along the same line of work that I did in civilian life.

For the last two months, my wife, the former Margie Brown of Edgewood Heights, Trucksville, has resided with me in Hattiesburg. If you would like to know how we boys like the South just ask Margie her opinion of it. I am sure she will tell you that it could never compare to the North. And as for Southern hospitality, why I don't think there is such a thing. If there was it must be off for the duration.

The weather down here is terrible. It is hot, sultry, and it rains every other day after which we have to plod around through a sea of mud.

Tonight I am Sergeant of the Guard and I have one of the Dallas boys on my relief. He happens to be Bud Sutton. As usual he is lying down, also reading the Post. He has been pestering me to mention his name so I had to do it to please him. We also have another boy from that vicinity. He happens to be Charles Moore, who is our motorcycle operator and messenger. We three certainly have a lot of fun when we go out together.

By the way, Bud was looking through the Post and glanced at the Birthday Column and he was very peeved to find that his name was not included. As you know, his birthday was August 5th.

I would like to say "hello" to all my friends in the Back Mountain region.

Well, it is now time for me to check my guards so I will sign off. Thanking you again, I remain,
Don Watson,
Camp Shelby, Miss.

P. S.: There is a slight change

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a community institution"

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Single copies, at a rate of 6c each, can be obtained every Friday morning at the following newsstands: Dallas—Tally-Ho Grille, Hislop's Restaurant; Shavertown, Evans' Drug Store; Trucksville—Leonard's Store; Idetown—Caves Store; Huntsville—Hontz's Store; Harvey's Lake—Edwards' Restaurant; Alderson—Deater's Store.

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in my address. It is now Sgt. Donald S. Watson instead of Pfc. Donald S. Watson.

• We've had a lot of complaints about Southern hospitality both in prose and poetry, but have so far kept them out of the Post because a great many of our papers now go to Southern camps. Sorry we overlooked Bud's birthday on August 5. The slip-up came because no one has ever completely filled out his Free Posts for Soldiers coupon. Give him our best and tell him it won't happen again until next year.—Editor.

Still In Denver
July 21, 1943.

Dear Folks:
Am still out here in Colorado. The building pictured here is only a tiny part of the whole set-up here. It's the most beautiful, best equipped hospital I've ever seen.

Best regards to all,
Lt. Estella M. Prushko,
A. N. C., N. 703779,
Fitzsimons Gen. Hospital,
Denver 8, Colorado.

• Thanks for the card.—Editor.

Address Change
July 23, 1943.

Dear Mr. Risley:
Please send the Post to my new address which is Lt. Woodrow A. Ruth, F. S. R. P., Atlanta Ord. Depot, Atlanta, Georgia. The weather here is really hot and we wish we were back in Pennsylvania. Thank you for the Post.

Yours sincerely,
W. A. Ruth,
2nd Lt., Ord. Dept.

• O. K., we will.—Editor.

Navy In Action
July 17, 1943.

Dear Editor:
From along the coast of Africa. Just a few lines to let you know I still receive the Dallas Post, but for some unknown reason it comes very late.

At the present time I just returned from the Island of Sicily. While we were there, I had some great experience in exchanging shells with German Messerschmitts and later seeing them come down in smoke. Bombs were dropped very close to our ship, but none scored. On July 12 I was on the mainland of the island, but just for a few minutes. All I can say is that our boys sure did a great job.

By the way, I have been advanced in rating and now I'm Boatswain Mate 2nd Class.

I also wish to send my regards to all my friends and say "hello" to my mother, who is at home waiting for me to come back. Don't worry,

THE SENTIMENTAL SIDE

By EDITH BLEZ

Peaches, peaches, peaches! There are peaches to the left of me, peaches to the right of me. I am completely surrounded by peaches. Evidently all my work on the farm this summer has been mere practice for the peach season because the peach season is really terrific. It is a little difficult to realize that Jersey can boast of such a peach crop. The farmer has

THE LOW-DOWN from HICKORY GROVE

I guess with most of us there is something that gives us a pain in the neck. With me, it is when some windy gent rises up and says the U. S. A. is such a bogged-down kind of unmanagable and difficult country that we gotta look out or we are sunk and nobody can save the day except the ones who have been saving it. If the ones who have been saving it have let it go to the dogs, almost—how come they can save it some more? That is where I get riled.

Jeffries or Fitzsimmons or Dempsey—none of them were champions forever. Better and new men always showed up, to put a haymaker on the slipping champions.

But I am straying off my subject of a pain in the neck. When I stop to think that these talkative gents take me for a sucker, my blood pressure zooms. The world will be revolving 2000 years hence—and no present living person will be there then to give it super-management.

With 130 million people in our U. S. A., I can't savvy how any one person can be indispensable—dingbust if I can. Fact is we could dispense with a few—and I would not overlook the ones telling us they are our only hope and salvation.

Yours with the low down,
JO SERRA.

Mom, I'm safe, but I won't be home until we clean them all up.

As ever,
Chet Rusiloski, B. M. 2/C,
c-o Fleet Post Office,
New York, N. Y.

• Congratulations, Chet, and many thanks for a letter written at a time when we know you must have been very busy. Many people ask about you.—Editor.

Cheerio
July 19, 1943.

Dear Editor:
Just a few lines to let you know that everything is fine in "jolly old England" and it is a very nice place over here now that the flowers and everything are in bloom.

I guess you heard of Bob Hope coming over here to put on a show for us. He did last night and it was a swell one. It was the best I've seen since I've been in the army. He also had Frances Langford and what a singer she is. All the boys fall for her. And he had Jack Pepper and Tony Romony. It was broadcast to the States. Maybe you heard it.

I want to thank you for your paper very much and I am sending you a letter with an application form. I have met a bunch of fellows from Pennsylvania and we have some swell times over here so far. Now I am closing and will say "Cheerio."

Pvt. Don Metzger,
Somewhere in England.
Via V . . . — Mail.

• It's a nice to know you are having such a swell time in England, Don. It's a great experience, isn't it?—Editor.

From Sicily
July 19, 1943.

Dear Editor:
I am no longer in Africa, but in a place just about the same for climate and terrain features. Sicily is close to Africa so the living conditions and farming are about the same.

The people treat us better here than they did in Africa. The civilians here were glad to see us take over. We would give them a cigarette and they would think that a great present. They hadn't had any real cigarettes in three months.

I had a barber give me a shave and paid him three cigarettes for it. You would think I gave him a dollar the way he acted. He told me he hadn't been able to get any for three months. They were very hungry also. Anything we gave them they would eat so quickly it seemed unbelievable.

I don't know if the news reporters mentioned the important part we played here. I could tell you quite a story if it wouldn't be cut out by the censor. Well, I can tell you when I come home.

(Continued on Page 3)

the nerve to tell me that it isn't much of a crop in comparison with previous years. The packing house is so jammed with peaches everything else is blotted out. Little did I suspect I would be wading in peach juice. In my wildest dreams I couldn't have possibly pictured all the peaches which come into the packing house each day to be sorted and packed and sent to market.

I haven't seen much of the fields since the peach crop ripened. I see the farm from the open doors of the packing house. At noon we rush out to relax under the trees because now our days are spent packing peaches. My days are just a mad mess of peaches. Many times during this summer I have wondered what the machine was which seemed to take up so much room in the packing house. The farmer did tell me it would be used for peaches but I didn't pay too much attention. There are so many things on the farm hiding in corners but the peach machine has become very important. It fills my day with a terrific noise which only comes to an end when all the peaches are on their way to New York or Philadelphia and sometimes Boston.

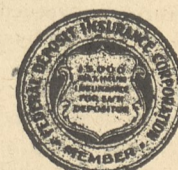
The peaches begin coming into the packing house early in the morning. As fast as they are brought in they are poured into the sorting machine where the worst of the fuzz is taken off. Have you ever been in a cloud of peach fuzz. The results are almost as bad as poison ivy. It itches as much. Cornstarch is the best remedy we have found so far. You should see the deadly white faces in the packing house. White faces and tired feet are the order of the day. We aren't used to standing on a hard floor. We have been working out in the fields where the ground is soft and easy on the feet. We complained a lot about the mud but it was really nothing to contend with now that we stand for long hours on a hard floor. We fuss a lot but we like it.

You should see the French sailors who have been working in the packing house. Their boat is stationed in Philadelphia and they have taken their furloughs on the farm. They speak very little English but the farmer speaks fairly good French and several of the High School girls speak a little French. It is amazing how well the boys get along. They sing all day long. They work very hard and seem to be having a fine time. They eat peaches until you wonder where they put them all, but we all seem to have a large capacity for peaches.

Packing peaches is hard but we have plenty of fun. We get a big kick out of shouting to each other above the roar of the motors. The place is a beehive of activity. There are crowds of people going in and out all day long. The telephone rings incessantly and something exciting is always on the verge of happening. Every now and then the packing machine breaks down. The farmer doesn't like it, but it means a pleasant recess for the rest of us. You should see us all rush out to the pump to get a drink and wash our faces in the cool water. Yesterday afternoon as we stood at the pump getting a drink a young puppy was standing in a mud hole trying to catch the shadow of a butterfly which was flying overhead. He was still there when we went home. He had a very busy afternoon.

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