

Hoosier Vagabond

By Ernie Pyle

Editor's Note: This is No. 45 of the Ernie Pyle war dispatches that are being reprinted during Ernie's vacation.

ON THE CHERBOURG PENINSULA, June, 1944.—Just a column of little items:

The other day a friend and I were in a mid-peninsula town not many miles from Cherbourg and we stopped to ask a couple of young French policemen wearing dark blue uniforms and Sam Browne belts where to go to buy a certain article.

Being quite hospitable, they jumped in the car and went along to show us. After we had finished our buying we all got back in the car. We tried to ask the policemen where they were going. They in turn asked us where we were going.

Knowing it was hopeless in our limited French to explain that we camp up the road, we merely said Cherbourg, meaning our camp was in that direction.

But the Frenchmen thought we meant to drive right into Cherbourg, which was still in German hands. Quick as a flash they jumped up, hit the driver on the shoulder to get the car stopped, shook hands rapidly all around, saluted, and scurried out with a terrified "au revoir." None of that Cherbourg stuff for those boys.

Some of the German officers are pleased at being captured, but your died-in-the-wool Nazi is not. They brought in a young one the other day who was furious. He considered it thoroughly unethical that we fought so hard.

The Americans had attacked all night, and the Germans don't like night attacks. When this special fellow was brought in he protested in rage.

"You Americans! The way you fight! This is not war! This is madness!"

The German was so outraged he never even got the irony of his own remarks—that madness though it be, it works.

You Can't Do That!

ANOTHER HIGH-RANKING officer was brought in and the first thing he asked was the whereabouts of his personal orderly. When told that his orderly was deadlier than a mackerel, he flew off the handle and accused us of depriving him of his personal comforts.

"Who's going to dig my foxhole for me?" he demanded.

You remember that in the early days of the invasion a whole bevy of high-ranking allied officers came to visit us—Generals Marshall, Eisenhower and

Arnold, Admirals King and Ramsey—there was so much brass you just bumped two-star generals without even begging pardon.

Now, generally, it seems, like to be brave. Or I should say that, being generals, they know they must appear to be brave in order to set an example. Consequently, a high-ranking general never ducks or bats an eye when a shell hits near him.

Well, the military police charged with conducting

this glittering array of generals around our beach-head tried to get them to ride in armored cars, since the country was still full of snipers.

But, being generals, they said no, certainly not,

no armored cars for us, we'll just go in open command cars like anybody else. And that's the way they did go.

But what the generals didn't know was this:

Taking no chances on such a collection of talent, the M. P.'s hid armored cars and tanks all along their route, behind hedges and under bushes, out of sight so that the generals couldn't see them, but there ready for action just in case anything did happen.

Most Wrecked Town

THE MOST WRECKED town I have seen so far is Saint Sauveur le Vicomte, known simply as "San Sah-Vure." Its buildings are gutted and leaning, its streets choked with rubble, and vehicles drive over the top of it.

Bombing and shellfire from both sides did it. The place looks exactly like world war I pictures of such places as Verdun. At the edge of the town the bomb craters are so immense that you could put whole houses in them.

A veteran of the last war pretty well summed up the two wars the other day when he said:

"This is just like the last war, only the holes are bigger."

So far as I know, we have entered France without anybody making a historic remark about it. Last time, you know, it was: "Lafayette, we are here."

The nearest I have heard to a historic remark was made by an ack-ack gunner, sitting on a mound of earth about two weeks after D-day, reading *The Stars and Stripes* from London. All of a sudden he said:

"Say, where's this Normandy beachhead it talks about in here?"

I looked at him closely and saw he was serious, so I said:

"Why, you're sitting on it."

And he said:

"Well, I'll be damned. I never knew that."

Inside Indianapolis

By Lowell Nussbaum

RAY RICE, head of the Quality Tool and Die Co., and one of the city's most enthusiastic amateur fliers, became a member of that exclusive organization, the Caterpillar club, recently when he accidentally fell out of an airplane, saving himself with his parachute. Ray was thinking about buying an open cockpit plane and got Bob Clay, instructor at Sky Harbor, to take him up for a demonstration. Ray wanted some acrobatics, so Bob accommodated him. While the plane was upside down in the middle of a slow roll, Ray accidentally knocked open the catch on his safety belt. Of course, he plummeted out of the plane. His first thoughts as he fell were of annoyance with Clay. "I thought he had dumped me out, and as

he had at him," Ray explained afterward. The parachute harness he was wearing didn't fit him well and in the fall, the rip cord release was twisted around his back so had to pull it with his left instead of right hand. Thus, he fell more than 1000 feet before he got the chute open. "As soon as the chute opened and I realized I was safe," he said, "I began to enjoy the sensation of floating down." Noticing that he was about to land in a field with several horses in it, fearing he might be trampled, he pulled the shroud lines on one side to steer the chute. He missed the horses, all right, but landed in the top of a walnut tree. A farmer came running up, Ray says, looked up at him and asked solicitously: "Is that you up there?" Ray agreed that it was, and he had dumped me out, and as

Mr. Gootershot

WHILE GOING from the Sunday school class rooms into the main auditorium of the Immanuel and Evangelical church last Sunday, Dr. Edward F. Bloemker noticed that his 5-year-old daughter, Linda, had dirty hands. He told her to wash them before going on into the church, then stopped to talk with friends. He was horrified when he looked back and saw Linda busily washing her hands in the drinking fountain, before a very appreciative audience. Child like, she probably figured it was silly

to hunt a washroom when there was water so handy. . . . Col. Oliver H. Geer, former director of the state welfare department's crippled children division, was the guest of friends at a farewell luncheon yesterday at the Severson. Col. Geer, who has been stationed at Camp Rucker, Ala., has hopes of going overseas before long. He had sandy hair when he left here, as a captain, three years ago. Now it's a silvery white, but he looks mighty fit. . . . Lt. Cmdr. L. B. Shackleford, formerly with the state selective service headquarters, now is at Princeton university in the military government school. . . . A certain enthusiastic Republican went downtown the other day, proudly displaying a Dewey button on the lapel of his coat. When he arrived home that evening, his wife discovered a Roosevelt button pinned on the back of his coat. His annoyance was something to behold.

Master Saleswomen

TWO YOUNG WOMEN who staff the A. W. V. S. war bond booth at union station Thursday nights are receiving congratulations on their sales prowess. These super salesmen, Myrtle Salmon of the water company and Mary Cutsinger, who works in the Indiana V. S. war bond office, have sold \$1000 worth of bonds. If he could buy that large a bond, maybe he could buy more, they reasoned. So they kept giving him sales talk. He bought another—and then another and wound up by being talked into \$10,000 worth of bonds. He gave a check for them and the check was good, too. It turned out he had been here on business and just stopped to talk to the girls while waiting for his train. . . . Sgt. Bill Kiley, who has been assigned to public relations at St. Louis, is "back" in civics and working at his old job with WPB. . . . Florence Webster Long, for many years woman's editor of the News, covered the recent meeting of the national Legion auxiliary. While being given an introduction to a woman she wished to interview, Mrs. Long was given a big buildup, and then introduced as Mrs. Long, "of the Times-Star." . . . Mrs. Charles L. Houdeyshell, 5029 Caroline ave., calls our attention to the fact there are 39 children in the 5000 block, Caroline ave. That includes two sets of twin girls and four babies born in the last month. That must set some sort of a record.

ONE LIGHT PLANE manufacturer a month ago announced a post-war plan to rehabilitate returning war veterans and former war workers in need of a job readjustment. It announced the belief that the light-plane industry is on the threshold of a new era which "may well parallel that progress made by the motor car industry after world war I." It tied in with the future merchandising of personal ownership-type aircraft. And it invited letters from service men and war workers who might be interested.

Today, the Aeronca Aircraft Corporation of Middletown, O., has received nearly 5000 letters from all over the world. Most of the writers are service men now engaged on the various fighting fronts.

Taught 3000 to Fly

BEHIND THE PLAN, now definitely underway, is Alfred B. Bennett, director of sales for Aeronca. He was a light plane distributor for many years and is credited with having sold more personal aircraft than any other man in the business. He also has taught more than 3000 persons to fly.

"We will show young people how to get started in the aviation business and go as far as their energy and ability will take them," is the Aeronca creed—one that the plan includes aid in planning and installing small airports, setting up small airport business,

establishing of distributor and sales branches, training of light aircraft salesmen and maintenance men, methods of increasing the light plane business through interesting prospective purchasers and use of a carefully planned nation-wide promotion plan.

How to Make Airports Pay

SPECIALLY PREPARED handbooks on how to make small airports pay, why "you should be a light plane dealer," and others offering an encyclopedia of information on the light plane business have been made available to interested service men and war workers.

The company announced that it also would help prospective airport owners to locate desirable territory and assist in "surveying areas to obtain 'airport populations.'

On future sale of its own planes, Aeronca is proposing that cost of flying lessons be applied to the sales price of the plane if it is purchased within a year of the initial flight.

An insurance plan which "will effect a very substantial saving in insurance premiums to future Aeronca purchasers" has been made available through a group of large mutual insurance companies.

Referring to the airport phase of the plan, Aeronca officials today said: "We feel that progress in light plane flying in post-war years will be measured by the number of airports available to the person owning or renting such aircraft."

Faster, more streamlined, more comfortable and "easier to fly" light planes are promised for the post-war period by Aeronca, which some years ago pioneered the first light plane.

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