

Yanks Reported 16 Miles from Berlin

SEE COLUMNS 1 AND 2

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La Grande Evening Observer

HUB OF NORTHEASTERN OREGON
Union and Wallowa Counties

Weather	
Data for 24 hours ending 7 a. m.	
Maximum	46
Minimum	29
Precipitation	.04
Forecast: Generally clear tonight; cloudy and warmer Saturday.	

ESTABLISHED 1896

LA GRANDE, OREGON FRIDAY EVENING, APRIL 13, 1945

FIVE CENTS

Peace Loving World Mourns For Roosevelt

German Defenses Collapse on Last Drive to Capital

PARIS, April 13 (UP)—American troops were reported unofficially only 15 to 16 miles from Berlin today and field dispatches said German resistance appeared to have collapsed even on the last approaches to the wrecked capital.

Far to the south, the American first and third armies virtually cut Germany in two with parallel advances that carried almost two-thirds of the way across the reich and brought the great military base of Leipzig within artillery range.

First army troops reached and perhaps entered Leipzig's companion stronghold of Halle, 15 miles to the northwest, and German spokesmen said other Yank columns were about 10 miles west and southwest of Leipzig at Merseburg and Pegau.

Flying tank columns of the second armored division officially were out in front of the U. S. ninth army drive on Berlin after crossing the Elbe river near Magdeburg and pushing ahead more than five miles to positions 55 miles or less southwest of the capital this morning.

Paratroops in Vanguard
Unconfirmed radio Paris reports said, however, that American paratroops had dropped in-

WITH U. S. THIRD ARMY, Germany, April 13 (UP)—A task force of the fourth armored division was revealed today to have broken through a German prison camp containing 900 Americans in the Wuerzburg area in a bold thrust.

Russian troops smashed 11 German tank divisions and destroyed 1,245 tanks and self-propelled guns, the order said.

Fighting mounted in intensity on the eastern approaches to Berlin on the other end of the eastern front, and it appeared that the zero hour for the Red army's march on the capital was close at hand.

Battle Across Oder
Radio Moscow said Soviet troops were waging "fierce battles" from their bridgeheads across the Oder river 30-odd miles east of Berlin, but gave no details. Cossack cavalry moved up to the Berlin front earlier this week, Soviet field dispatches said.

Commentators on the Berlin radio said Soviet troop movements were under way all the way from Stettin Bay north of the capital to the confluence of the Oder and the Neisse in the south, a front of at least 110 miles.

Military observers in London expected Premier Marshal Stalin to give the order any hour now for Marshal Gregory K. Zhukov's first White Russian army to see RED ARMY... Page 5

High Educational Standards Of Oregon Jeopardized by Lack of Qualified Teachers

By ERIC W. ALLEN, Jr., United Press Staff Correspondent
SALEM, Ore., April 13 (UP)—Oregon, traditionally one of the best educated and most literate states in the union, has suffered great damage to its educational facilities due to the war. And it is facing a situation which, during the next few years, may result in a deplorable condition in its schools.

At present, Oregon is on top of the educational heap. A recent survey of soldiers in the U. S. army showed that Oregonians were only eight tenths of one per cent "educationally deficient," compared with a national average many times that figure.

("Educationally deficient" means either totally illiterate, or possessing no more than a fourth grade education. The survey was made by the U. S. chamber of commerce.)

State Has Top Rating
Figures related by Rex Putnam, state superintendent of public instruction, show that Oregon is highest in the nation, and that all west coast states are in the top bracket—with Washington showing only 1.2 per cent deficiency and California 2.8.

But this high standing is threatened, Putnam says, because of present and potential conditions Oregon may face in the next few years. The close schools and 200 teacher requirements to the point where educational standards are threatened. See SCHOOLS... Page 5

Body Of Former President Starts On Last Journey

State Funeral To Be Tomorrow, Burial Sunday

ATLANTA, April 13 (UP)—The special train bearing former President Roosevelt's body northward arrived at Atlanta at 2:28 p. m. EWT.

While the nation and the capital rallied against the shock of the sudden tragedy a special train rolled north from Georgia bearing the president's body to Washington. Tomorrow there will be state funeral ceremonies at 4 p. m. (EWT) and Sunday the burial at the Hyde Park estate the president loved so well.

Running behind schedule the train reached Atlanta at 2:28 p. m. It was met by an armed escort and a crowd of about 1,000 spectators.

White House officials said the president's body will not lie in state at any time.

WARM SPRINGS, Ga., April 13 (UP)—The body of Franklin D. Roosevelt today was borne from the "Little White House" of Georgia to the roll of muffled drums, starting the long, last journey to Washington.

The hot southern sun shone in a blue sky as the funeral cortege left the green hills the president loved so well. The procession slowly moved down the winding mile-long road to Warm Springs station.

In the distance a church bell pealed from some country steeple. The cortege left the "Little White House" at 10:30 a. m. along the road stood hundreds of restored cars. See STATE... Page 5

81 Die As Twister Sweeps Through Oklahoma Cities

OKLAHOMA CITY, Okla., April 13 (UP)—Eighty-one persons are known dead and more than 500 were injured last night when a tornado ripped across southeastern Oklahoma, causing extensive damage and casualties in a half a dozen communities.

The toll was rising hourly as rescue workers recovered more bodies from the ruins of wrecked homes and buildings.

The greatest loss of life was reported at Antlers, a town of 3,200 population which was almost entirely laid waste by the terrific force of the tornado. Fifty-one bodies were recovered and more were being found "every few minutes." More than 200 other persons were reported injured at Antlers.

Nine persons, including five students of the demolished Oklahoma school for the blind, were killed at Muskogee and more than 200 were injured. Two soldiers were killed and more than 100 persons were injured in Oklahoma City where the wind cut a swath of destruction through the southeastern residential district.

Troops and a medical corps unit were rushed from Camp Maxey, Tex., to aid the residents of Antlers, residential districts of which were "flattened." The business district also was laid waste. It is estimated that between 400 and 500 homes were demolished.

Fifty civilian doctors from nearby Hugo, Durant, Atoka and Idabel also were rushed to Antlers for emergency duty.

81 Are Missing As Ships Collide

NEW BEDFORD, Mass., April 13 (UP)—Eighty-one crew members of an American freighter and a Canadian tanker which collided and burned in Buzzard's bay during a heavy fog were missing today.

Two crew members were known dead and 52 others were hospitalized, three in serious condition.

Survivors reported that the Canadian vessel, the tanker, burst into flames and sank so fast that the crew abandoned ship within four minutes after the collision.

Snow Is Blamed For Auto Collision
Heavy snowfall which obscured the vision of motor vehicle drivers Wednesday morning is given in reports to the city police as the cause of a collision at Sixth street and K avenue between a car driven by Mrs. Genevieve Carter, 2008 Q avenue, and a pickup truck driven by L. Whittaker.

Lois Hill reported that her car was damaged in a collision at Fifth and Jefferson streets Wednesday evening with the truck driven by Roy S. Wood.

Hail to the Chief



President Harry S. Truman, who today took his first official action as president of the United States, having taken the oath late yesterday a short time after the death of his chief, Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Former Missouri Farm Boy Is 32nd President of United States

WASHINGTON, April 13 (UP)—The gray-haired man with the gold-rimmed spectacles walked into the awesome confusion that was the White House and into the most momentous moment of his life.

He came in as Vice President Harry S. Truman and he walked out again as the 32nd president of the United States.

He made his way into the apple-green cabinet room of the White House. Cabinet members were seated there, solemn faced. Leaders of congress were there too. They stood in groups, talking quietly.

Truman III at Ease
Harry S. Truman sat down in an overstuffed leather chair. It was understandable that he was not completely at ease. Then up stepped Chief Justice Harlan F. Stone of the United States supreme court. The vice president got to his feet. Someone gave him a Bible from President Roosevelt's office.

He held it reverentially on his left palm. His right hand was on the cover. The clock on the mantelpiece pointed to 6:05 p. m. CWT. Three minutes later, the chief justice began administering the oath of office.

"I, Harry Shippe Truman, do solemnly swear that I will faithfully execute the office of president of the United States and will, to the best of my ability, preserve, protect and defend the constitution of the United States."

The chief justice recited the oath from memory. The new president repeated the words after him in phrase by phrase.

It was 6:08 p. m. when Harry S. Truman became the 32nd president of the United States.

Not a member of the Roosevelt family was present at the ceremony.

Three reporters were present, representing the three press associations. Mrs. Truman was there too, a proud wife and mother who a few moments before had dabbed at tear-stained eyes with a crumpled handkerchief. Her hand held that of their 20-year-old daughter, Mary Margaret. Both stood in the background as the oath was administered. They were just spectators.

Wallace is Witness
One of the witnesses was the man who might have been in Truman's place had the political fates been different—former vice president Henry A. Wallace, Wallace, who will remain in President Truman's cabinet as secretary of commerce, was so shaken that Secretary of State Edward R. Stettinius, jr., had to help him from the room.

Mrs. Roosevelt was 11 blocks away. See FARM BOY... Page 5

Jap Raiders Sink U. S. Destroyer; 118 Enemy Planes Lost
GUAM, April 13 (UP)—The Japanese were revealed today to have lost 118 planes in two desperate suicidal attacks against American forces in Okinawa area yesterday.

Admiral Chester W. Nimitz disclosed that one U. S. destroyer was sunk in the action and several other ships damaged, although the latter continued in operation.

La Grande Will Halt Business To Honor Roosevelt

Meditation Period To Be Observed At 11 A. M. Tomorrow

In memory of the late President Franklin D. Roosevelt, all business houses in La Grande will observe a 10 minute pause in the day's activities tomorrow and spend the time in silent meditation. Business will be suspended from 11 to 11:10 a. m.

This was agreed upon by members of the merchants committee who convened this morning in the chamber of commerce office.

The fire department bell will be tolled signaling the pause for memorial. The committee has requested all churches in the city to conduct memorial services Sunday, the day of the president's burial. The committee also urged that the flag be displayed.

City schools today are holding individual memorial services, and in the high school assembly this afternoon, Rev. C. A. Kopp was to give the eulogy.

Federal agencies throughout the country will be closed tomorrow afternoon under an order issued today from the White House.

Superintendent of Public Instruction Rex Putnam today urged schools of Oregon to hold memorial services in honor of President Roosevelt.

Gov. Earl Snell said today that all state offices will be closed during the time of President Roosevelt's funeral tomorrow.

State liquor stores are closed today and will remain closed until Monday.

Elgin Plans Memorial
Jack Fitzgerald of Elgin this afternoon announced that city will cooperate in the 10-minute pause for meditation, suspending all operations in the business houses.

The bells in the Elgin city hall and the churches will toll during the 10-minute period.

Month of Mourning Proclaimed By Gen. Eisenhower

PARIS, April 13 (UP)—Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower ordered a 30-day mourning period for American troops throughout the European theater today in memory of President Roosevelt.

Eisenhower flashed back the order to supreme headquarters from the front, where he was conferring with his generals on the final phases of the battle of Germany.

The battle was drawing to the end long envisioned by President Roosevelt. And it was under the direction of the man he picked to be supreme commander on the western front.

Word of the death of the president spread rapidly through supreme headquarters and Paris, leaving sadness and grief in its wake.

Gen. Charles De Gaulle, provisional president of France, called President Truman that the French government learned of Mr. Roosevelt's death with "great emotion and deep sadness."

He ordered flags lowered to See ARMY... Page 5

B-29s Rain Fire Bombs On Tokyo

GUAM, April 14 (UP)—A huge force of hundreds of superfortresses dropped thousands of tons of fire bombs into five-square-mile arsenal area of Tokyo early today.

In a new attempt to burn out a segment of the teeming enemy capital city, the B-29s directed their incendiaries on the great ammunition production area about six miles northwest of the Imperial palace, and at the edge of the 17 square mile area devastated with a huge loss of life March 10.

New Chief Executive Reaffirms Principles Set Up by Roosevelt

WASHINGTON, April 13 (UP)—President Harry S. Truman took the nation's helm today, summoning to the White House the chiefs of war and foreign policy to pledge his determination to carry forward President Roosevelt's objectives of speedy victory and firm peace.

His first official act was to issue through Secretary of State Edward R. Stettinius, jr., a proclamation of a month's mourning for Mr. Roosevelt.

But already he had plunged deep into the monumental task of carrying on the national war effort, without pause or hesitation, both in the west and in the east.

Within three hours of his first working day as president, Mr. Truman had shattered his first precedent. After conferring at the White House with military and diplomatic chiefs, he drove to Capitol Hill for a luncheon conference in the office of Lester Biffle, secretary of the senate, with the leaders of congress.

He also arranged to make a formal declaration of his objectives before a joint congressional session at 1 p. m. Monday. He may speak by radio to the armed forces Tuesday night.

James F. Byrnes, "assistant president" under Mr. Roosevelt until a few days ago, hurried to the White House to offer its new occupant his unique intimate knowledge of Mr. Roosevelt's vital discussions with Prime Minister Churchill and Marshal Stalin at Yalta.

Brushing aside precedent as easily as did his famous predecessor, Truman emerged from the White House a little more than two hours after taking over the president's desk.

He went to Capitol Hill and lunched with congressional leaders of both parties—a symbolic gesture which many felt might go far toward solidifying congress behind the nation's new chief executive and commander-in-chief. See VIGOROUS... Page 6

The presidential proclamation was issued by Secretary of State Edward R. Stettinius. At the same time, by order of the president, Stettinius ordered that:

1.—Flags to remain at half mast on all public buildings of the United States for one month—until the close of Monday, May 14.

2.—All executive departments and agencies of the government be closed tomorrow afternoon—the day of the funeral.

Saddened Britain Honors Roosevelt

LONDON, April 13 (UP)—Prime Minister Churchill called the British cabinet into special session today to consider the effect of President Roosevelt's death, which many diplomats feared might have grave repercussions on world security plans.

Churchill and King George led the British in paying tribute to Mr. Roosevelt. For the first time in history the House of Commons adjourned in observance of the death of an American president.

Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden will attend Mr. Roosevelt's funeral, it was announced officially.

Churchill told an eight-minute Commons session that Mr. Roosevelt's "friendship for the cause of freedom and for the causes of the weak and poor won him immortal renown."

The house then adjourned as a mark of respect after setting aside Tuesday for personal tributes to the late president. When it reconvenes next Tuesday, Churchill is expected to offer a traditional motion expressing sympathy to the King on the death of "his cousin"—the time-honored designation of the head of a great and friendly state.

"Big Three" Is Gone
Roosevelt, the realization persisted that the "big three" is dead with him. Saddened and bewildered diplomats, British and Allied, felt that the peculiar personal type of negotiations brought into full flower by the death of "his cousin"—the time-honored designation of the head of a great and friendly state. See BRITAIN... Page 5

Tributes to Memory of Defender Of Democracy Heard 'Round World
By United Press
STOCKHOLM — King Gustav today messaged President Truman: "Deeply shocked by the tragic news of President Roosevelt's sudden death, I beg to express my deepest sympathy and sincerest regrets in the great loss which the United States and Swedish people and the whole world have suffered in the death of this great man."

ROME — Pope Pius XII cabled his personal condolences to Mrs. Roosevelt and President Truman early today immediately after he learned of Mr. Roosevelt's death.

MARSHAL MONTGOMERY'S HQRS. — Marshal Sir Bernard L. Montgomery messaged Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower today: "As commander of land forces of the British Empire fighting in western Europe, I want to express to you our sincere regret at the death of the president. Few of us, if any, had the privilege of knowing him, but to all of us he had become a friend. He was a great man and a great champion of freedom, and this loss at this time is a shattering blow. I should be grateful if you would convey to Mrs. Roosevelt our sincere sympathy."

MOSCOW — Moscow newspapers today printed on their front pages a picture of President Roosevelt with his name in a black border. Marshal Stalin hailed President Roosevelt in death today as "a great politician of world significance and a pioneer in the organization of the world." See WORLD... Page 5