

Cottage Grove Sentinel

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ABOUT DER FUHRER'S PANTS

We have read several strong intimations that the bombing of Hitler's quarters several weeks ago, in which the pants were literally blown off der fuhrer was a frame up to get some of the German generals with another bloody purge.

WE'LL WAIT

C. O. Anlauf, president of the Rod and Gun club takes us to task for an editorial appearing in our issue of August 3rd, wherein we raised the question as to why the Rod and Gun club had made no effort to develop the proposed recreational project at the Cottage Grove lake.

KEEP YOUR FINGERS CROSSED

Keep your fingers crossed, but it looks now that we may be able to pull through one of the driest summers in years without a serious timber fire. And with the present man power shortage, a bad timber fire now could really hurt.

"LIFTING OURSELVES BY OUR BOOTSTRAPS"

Despite the intimation in advertisement and handbills, that the labor movement is backing The Oregon Employment and Retirement Insurance Plan, the plain truth is that the labor movement is opposed to it because of its regressive tax feature.

In addition to its being unsound, the plan is sponsored dishonestly, and untrue and ridiculous assertions and hints as to labor support are here and now, in the name of the State Federation of Labor, repudiated and denounced.

The following statement was adopted at the recent convention concerning this proposal:

A proposal to lift ourselves by our bootstraps sponsored by the state council of Townsend Clubs relies upon a sales tax under another name to finance a program of old-age benefits. It is thoroughly unsound and we recommend against it.

Shake-down Bills have been a source of annoyance and disgust; it is difficult to detect them among a host of honest measures; there seems to be no substitute for the protection to the business public afforded by the election of good legislators; it is the slothfulness of the voting public which so often betrays the important trust by permitting the election of lesser men through default.

ONE REASON FOR RELUCTANCE

Cottage Grove, Oregon, August 8, 1944. Cottage Grove Sentinel, Cottage Grove, Oregon. To the Editor: In your paper of July 27th

there was an article concerning the float which has been built at the Cottage Grove lake. It mentioned the ones who had contributed to the construction of the float, but at least one name has been omitted. The logs on which the float was built were donated by Clayton Simons, who lives by the lake.

The business men or lumber companies are never overlooked when they donate some material to some worthy cause, and it would seem if the logs were worth having and using they were worth being mentioned in the paper along with the rest.

I do not know who your reporter was, but oversights like this tend to make people more reluctant to help another time. Yours truly, Mrs. Clayton Simons.

Makes Steel Brittle Tiny amounts of hydrogen in steel, even as small as one two-thousandth of a per cent by weight, can make steel brittle.

YOUR WONDERFUL BODY

The living body has wonderful powers for its own protection and survival. It is able to maintain a constant temperature in all climates—in the heat of the tropics—in the bitter cold of the far north. It maintains a constant concentration in the blood of water, proteins, sugar, and salt. It maintains the blood at a practically constant low acidity. By arousing sensations of thirst and hunger, the body can call for more necessary food elements.

DR. H. A. HAGEN



MR. WINKLE GOES TO WAR

By THEODORE PRATT W.N.U. RELEASE

(Continued from last week.)

CHAPTER X

Between Mr. Tinker and the irreducible fact that they were actually off to one of the various wars going on, Mr. Winkle didn't sleep much that first night. He lay there precariously on the edge of the berth trying to adjust himself to the situation and regretting a little that he had not taken the chance of getting out of the Army when he had the opportunity.

This was, as the saying went, it. This was what he had trained for. He was going to where battles were being fought. He was going to help fight them. The realization struck him so forcibly that he nearly fell out of the berth, especially when Mr. Tinker gave him an extra hard push.

Then, again, he endeavored to look on the bright side of it. He was a hardened soldier, wasn't he?

Well, maybe not hard, but with plenty of preparation.

The additional months as a member of a service company had brought the confidence of experience.

They had brought a Corporal's stripes, and finally those of a full-fledged Sergeant. He and Mr. Tinker

er were a team, it having been found that Mr. Tinker was good at the heavier work, while he supplied a little more skill at figuring it out.

He couldn't overlook the stigma of it, either. Here they were, several hundred men in a special train, rushing to an unknown destination to save the nation. He knew that crack streamliners were sidetracked for them. Everything made way for them. Even if you were hurrying to risk your life, that gave you a sense of importance.

He fell asleep on this thought, dreaming that he was sinking in wide waters and that he grasped at a tiny straw to save himself.

Dawn was breaking behind the train when he awakened. He lay for a moment, surprisingly not much moved by this evidence of to where they were going. He simply accepted it.

At least there would be warmth and palm trees and jungle and tropic beaches.

Perhaps, he reflected, it would be an interesting and even a nice trip and nothing at all would happen to him. Certainly in no other circumstances would he ever hope to visit the South Seas. Above all, he wanted to see a cannibal; a person who ate another person had always interested him.

He roused Mr. Tinker, both to get him to move over and to let him know. "Look," he said.

Mr. Tinker gazed out the window. He was a little slow in understanding about the sun rising in the east in back of the train, which meant they were going west. When he did he yelled, "It's the Japs! The Japs!"

"We ain't there already?" someone asked querulously.

"Shud up!" voices called. "Shud up!"

Mr. Winkle expected to be marched right on a ship as soon as they reached their embarkation port two days later. But there seemed to be no such hurry as that which had brought them here.

They were given physical examinations, their equipment was inspected, and orders were issued to keep their canteens filled to the mouth. Mr. Winkle understood the reason for this was for them to have a supply of water should they find themselves on a life raft.

Thus readied, they were assembled one morning and marched out through an entrance in the brick wall. They made their way along a road at the side of the harbor, in which many ships, all painted an in-

different gray, were moored. Mr. Winkle had never seen a real ship before and was impressed with their size. He wondered which would be theirs.

They were called to a halt beside the high wall of one of the larger vessels.

He looked up at it and thought, "Here I go. Here I go."

But he found himself only a little excited, and speculated on why he wasn't greatly perturbed.

Orders were shouted. To his amazement and relief, they started marching back again to the stazing area. This had been merely practice.

The man next to him said, "That was a close one."

Each day after that they went through the same process. The third time it was repeated there were complaints.

If they were going, why didn't they go?

Why didn't they start and get this war over with?

Even Mr. Winkle asked these questions and came not to believe in any of the marches to the ship. He took it for granted that each time he arrayed himself in his full equipment and sweated to the pier that he would turn right around again and come back. With others he began to accept the rumor that they weren't going at all.

The day they didn't stop, but kept right on marching up the gangplank and on to the ship, he felt betrayed, cheated and fooled.

To Mr. Tinker at his side he observed, "Well, I guess we've burned our gangplanks behind us."

Mr. Tinker stared at him, scowling to get his meaning. Though he didn't know the true quotation, he appeared to find something wrong with Mr. Winkle's version, or at least with the way he spoke.

"What's the matter, Pop?" he asked. "You seasick already?"

More men poured on to the ship, and still more marched along the pier toward her. Mr. Winkle, Mr. Tinker and ten others were shown below to their private stateroom. Instead of bunk, a large cabin had been stripped of its beds and other luxuriant furnishings and canvas hammocks slung in tiers of three from a wooden framework.

Mr. Winkle drew one of the top hammocks, so close to the ceiling that it made him feel like a fly sticking there. They stowed their gear and investigated the quarters. One of the men opened a door and stood, frozen in his tracks.

"Come here," he said in an awed voice, "and see if you see what I'm looking at."

They crowded around him, peering over his shoulders, and saw a gleaming bathroom.

"Holy cow!" another man cried. "Ain't our suite sweet?"

The ship would be totally blacked out at night, which meant no smoking on deck.

No cigarette butt or scrap of paper was to be thrown overboard lest it leave a trail which could be followed.

In case the ship was hit and had to be abandoned, they were to slide down landing nets which would be lowered, and not jump overboard.

If a man fell overboard, the ship could not risk stopping to pick him up.

These instructions caused no evident alarm. Normally, Mr. Winkle should have had an acute attack of imagination right then and there. But it didn't come, as it hadn't lately in the learning that a great and solicitous mother, the Army, looked after his every interest. All he had to do was to trust it, obey orders, and, most important of all, keep his mouth shut.

The ship sailed that night while some of them were asleep and some of them were still adjusting their bodies to the hammocks. Mr. Winkle, listening, heard the deep thrum of the engines. He put his hand against the ceiling and felt a thrumming there. The smell of oil was stronger. A low, sleepy murmuring came from other men. A forward movement became perceptible.

That was all. No one spoke. In the morning they were at sea. Their own and dozens of other ships scratched a glassy mirror with continual, untired zigzags. The convoy stretched into the distance as far as the eye could see. At its outer edges they could make out destroyers and other warcraft, which kept up a worried pacing back and forth, in and out, and sometimes around in wide sweeps and circles.

It was heartening to see them and their fellow troopships. Though they knew that death was possible any instant from the sky or from beneath the water, it seemed just as impossible that anything could touch them.

Soldiers were everywhere on the ship, the last inch of space being crowded with them. If they had little privacy before, they had none now. It was barely possible to step anywhere without walking on somebody, or putting your foot into the middle of a crap game.

Somehow they managed to move

around, for the most part unharmed. Mr. Winkle marveled at what he and other men had been conditioned to stand. He began to have a respect for the extent that man would let himself be abused for the opportunity of traveling a long way to get killed. Despite its inconvenience and tragedy, there was a decided element of joy in war, of virile men becoming braves and setting out on the exciting adventures of the warpath.

The favorite pastime, while standing or sitting on deck, or leaning against the rail, was speculating on where they were going.

"Australia," was proposed, "and I aim to see one of them kangaroos jumping around with her kid in her pocket."

"No, sir," another differed. "If it was Australia, they'd told us. My cousin went out there last year and he knew from the time he left. He ain't seen any kangaroos yet, but he says the people there are hep cats who cook with gas."

"The Solomons," a third man said. "We took them over, didn't we? We're being sent out to hold them."

I had it straight from the top kick—"Something tells me," another man interrupted, "we're going to be dropped off in Hawaii. I always wanted to go there, and now is it."

He was hoisted down on the basis that no such luck could be theirs.

It was Sergeant Winkle's considered opinion that they were going to New Guinea.

"What they get there, Pop?" he was asked. "What's your book say?"

"Cannibals," he told them. He thought his guidebook had said that.

"Me," said Mr. Tinker. "I don't care where it is just so there's Japs."

On the fourth day, while sitting on the deck with his back against the rail, Mr. Winkle nearly jumped out of his life belt when there was a loud explosion forward.

He was lurching to his feet and had reached a crouching position before he realized that the gun crews were holding firing practice.

He sank back down again, seeing other men following suit.

The guns kept on chattering, sending up shells to burst high in the air at different levels. From the other ships they could see the same practice going on. It was fascinating to watch, and the noise and smell of burning gunpowder added to their sense of security.

In the midst of the racket Mr. Winkle was startled to hear his name being called.

"Hi, Pop!"

Locking up, he saw Freddie Tindall. In back of him were Jack and several more of the original Springfield contingent.

"Hello, Mr. Winkle," Jack greeted him. The boy's eyes twinkled, and he spoke as if they were meeting casually on Maple Avenue.

"This," said Mr. Winkle, struggling to his feet, "is quite a place to have a reunion."

They held it, nevertheless, in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, pumping one another's hands and yelling above the noise of the guns. Freddie cried, "We've got more than this! Hey, Alphabet! Alphabet!"

In a moment the wizened little Sergeant pushed his way down the deck. The first thing he saw was Mr. Winkle's stripes with the "T" below them. Without raising his voice, but still making himself heard he lectured:

"I been in the Army eighteen years. You been in eight months, and you rate with me. We ain't going to win no war that way. And look what I got in my machine-gun crew. Him," he pointed at Jack, "and him," he indicated Freddie. "All they can do is outshoot any of them guys working their pump-guns."

No enemy, from under, on, or over the sea appeared either that night or at dawn when the planes returned to take up their vigil and escort the convoy to port.

Land, now made out boldly, was seen to be a low-lying shore reaching up abruptly to a towering volcanic mountain ridge running along the far side of Talizo. It was a scene of such beauty as to be very nearly unreal. As they approached closer, here and there the white wisp of a waterfall could be seen throwing itself down from the mountain jungles and disappearing into the thick green growth below.

That war and the killing and maiming of men could exist on this peaceful, looking island did not seem credible.

Looking at it, all you wanted to do was to land here, among the palm trees on the white sandy shore and spend the rest of your life.

Mr. Winkle and his several thousand companions gazed at it with awe and wonderment. The island was almost the thing for which Mr. Winkle searched, and he wondered if he would find it here.

Mr. Winkle's impression of landing was not one of danger, but of fascination.

There was a stir among the ships of the convoy.

Messages were exchanged by blinker and flag.

Mr. Winkle's ship and five supply vessels began to take erratic courses.

It seemed as if something was going to happen after all, that a submarine had been detected. The men, lining the rails, watched and held their breaths.

Maneuvering smoothly, the six ships detached themselves from the main body of the convoy, setting off at an angle to it. At the same time three destroyers rode in the same direction, herding them. Deep-throated whistles said goodby.

It was clear now that they were going on a mission of their own. Rumor ran like fire through the ship.

They were a special task force.

An urgent call had come for them from some harassed point.

Plans had been changed. Land was soon to be sighted. They would see action at any moment.

CHAPTER XI

At lunch time they were at last told where they were going. Nothing was said about the main convoy. From the beginning it had been planned to send them to the island of Talizo, one of the steppingstones in the retrieving of certain precious stones stolen by the Japanese when no one was looking.

The south end of the fifty-mile-long island had been captured by American forces, along with an airfield conveniently just completed by the Japs, who still held the northern half of Talizo. They would land some time the next morning.

Mr. Winkle watched the effect of this announcement on the other men.

Each acted as if he had been given a good stiff drink. After the long, cramped, and inactive voyage, they looked forward to any change, especially the prospect of fighting. They were eager for it. Some of them were serious and thoughtful, but all were ready, even anxious.

Mr. Winkle himself felt that he had been left out when the drinks were passed around.

The old fear and terror took hold of him, shaking him by the throat like a cat with a mouse.

Instinctively, he reached inside his shirt and fingered his identification tags, wondering how soon one might be cut off and the other remain with the body.

Then stoicism asserted itself. He had been assigned a job, prepared for it, and he would do it. Contagiously, the feelings of the other men caught hold of him. If they were ready to fight, he was ready too. Maybe he wasn't a killer, but he could keep in condition and repair the vehicles of the killers. That had its place, its value. It was just as necessary as shooting. Anyway, almost as necessary.

Mr. Winkle searched in his guidebook for the entry under Talizo. To his satisfaction he found that the island had cannibals. It was, in fact, noted for them.

Late that afternoon a collection of dark dots came out of the sinking sun ahead of them. The gun crews of their own and the other ships sprang to their stations, alert and tense. But soon word was passed about that these were their own planes, come to protect them in that most dangerous of all times, dusk on the sea.

The planes, now seen to be high in the sky, kept coming on, a whole squadron which reached straight above them and then wheeled to fly back and forth, forming a protective umbrella over the ships. The men, jamming the rails, cheered, yelling wildly, and Mr. Winkle heard his own voice adding itself to the lusty noise being sent up to join the roar of the plane motors.

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Mr. Winkle's impression of landing was not one of danger, but of fascination.

Their troopship was the first vessel through the mine field and the opening made by a small tug drawing back the boom of the submarine net. Almost before the anchor was down in the harbor, landing nets were being thrown over the sides of the ship and boats lowered.

They climbed down, packing themselves in the lifeboats. Three of these, tied together, were pulled by a launch to one of the piers. The men stared at a half-sunken supply ship they passed. Some of them identified shore batteries placed on either point of the harbor.

It was hot on land after the sea as they marched through town.

Passing by the thatched huts, they saw that most of them were vacant. Only here and there were they occupied by brown-skinned people whose

large dark eyes gazed at them apprehensively. A few of them were girls clad in a simple garment of printed cloth which left one shoulder bare and outlined the rest of their slim bodies to their knees.

"Whadda you know?" breathed Mr. Tinker. "Whadda you know?"

"Now, now," cautioned Mr. Winkle. "We're here to protect them, that's all."

"Sure," said Mr. Tinker. "Sure."

He twisted his head, to keep in sight as long as he could what he looked forward to protecting.

On the far side of the village the jungle began, a monstrous growth of palms, lianas, bushes, vivid flowers, breadfruit trees, and banana plants. Into this they marched along a narrow white shell road that threw up heat in nearly suffocating waves. They began to sweat.

They came to a tent so cleverly camouflaged that they failed to make it all out at once. It was painted the exact color of the vegetation. Limbs of trees grew over its roof. Nets, to which branches were attached and sprayed a permanent green, covered it in other places.

The jungle was honeycombed with such tents, some of them small, some of them large enough to house a small circus. Again Mr. Winkle felt safe. He told himself nothing could happen to him in such a hidden installation. He had half-expected to make a landing amidst a hail of bullets and exploding bombs.

At their first meal in the mess tent they tasted new foods, potato-like taro, papaya, and wild chicken. Mr. Winkle spat most of them out and took to what he called civilized dishes also provided. Mr. Winkle swallowed them, if not with relish, at least with pleasure in their proving how definitely he was on a tropic island.

The newcomers were asked such a barrage of questions that they had little chance to put any of their own. The few they managed to get in were mostly answered with a lifting of the shoulders. One man jerked his thumb toward the north and said, "We're just sitting each other out."

The Messrs. Winkle and Tinker reported to one of the shops, where Mr. Tinker was open-mouthed at the equipment and Mr. Winkle was impressed.

Trucks, reconnaissance and command cars, and jeeps and peeps were driven into spacious tents which held as complete equipment as to be found at home. The canvas sides were rolled up for ventilation, giving them a pleasant air of being outdoors. The familiar smell of oiled machinery and carbon monoxide fumes reached their nostrils. These perfumes were more heartening than the sweet, curious odors of the jungle with which they competed.

Men like themselves, trained as the vehicles of the killers, that had its place, its value. It was just as necessary as shooting. Anyway, almost as necessary.

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