

Thousands Here Scan Skies Aiding the Army Air Service

Marion, Polk Residents Man Posts

By ISABEL CHILDS
Eyes aloft!
The signal has been given, declare the thousands of men and women who man the army observation posts of Marion and Polk counties.

That signal, sounded December 7, found skeleton staffs ready to put this civilian-operated feature of the army aircraft warning service on a 24 hour basis December 8. The history of this will include mention of the 1,500,000 persons who offered their time, their eyes and their ears to protect their communities and to assist the great over-all military plan.

Some of the stories of the aircraft observers of our own home town may be heard at the meeting called for 8 o'clock Wednesday night at Leslie junior high school auditorium. Much of that program time is to be taken in discussion of the service and the presentation of a part of the training program for observers by army personnel. Those who serve the Salem post are requested by Mickey Blumenstein, chief observer to be present; the public is invited and observers from nearby posts will be there, too.

Only portion of the program not for public consumption will be a restricted film and that will be presented elsewhere in the building, for observers only.

Such meetings of observers are among the pleasant by-products of a task which, during dull winter months and long, cold nights sometimes grows boring.

At Spring Valley, where the post, a small building which was once the wing of a Salem residence is mounted on stilts and looks out over one of the most varied agricultural scenes in Polk county, there was a wood-cutting bee of which you may have heard.

Nights on hilltops are cold and the Spring Valley post stove burns wood, so residents of the area contributed fuel, but busy with seeding and other spring tasks, felt they could not cut and deliver it.

An army truck and a dozen men from the signal corps came to their rescue and the woodpile at the post "should last for the duration," declares Mrs. Vivian Stratton, whose husband is chief observer there.

Mrs. Stratton, weekday worker at the state library, where she heads the Victory Book campaign for Oregon, puts in a regular Sunday shift at the post, and we found her there a week ago studying through field glasses the movements of a buzzard. "When they simply float, they're horribly deceptive," she said, and we agreed with her that had there been a tractor in the field below we'd have been tempted to send an "army flash" over the telephone which would have alerted the countryside because ours would certainly have been an otherwise "uncharted plane."

To get back to the woodcutting: when it was finished, the community celebrated with one of its famous dinners at the schoolhouse, inviting the young army men, who to this day talk of Spring Valley chicken as they do of their own mothers' cooking.

In many another rural area, where social life has been cut to the minimum by wartime work requirements, the observation post has served as a center of interest.

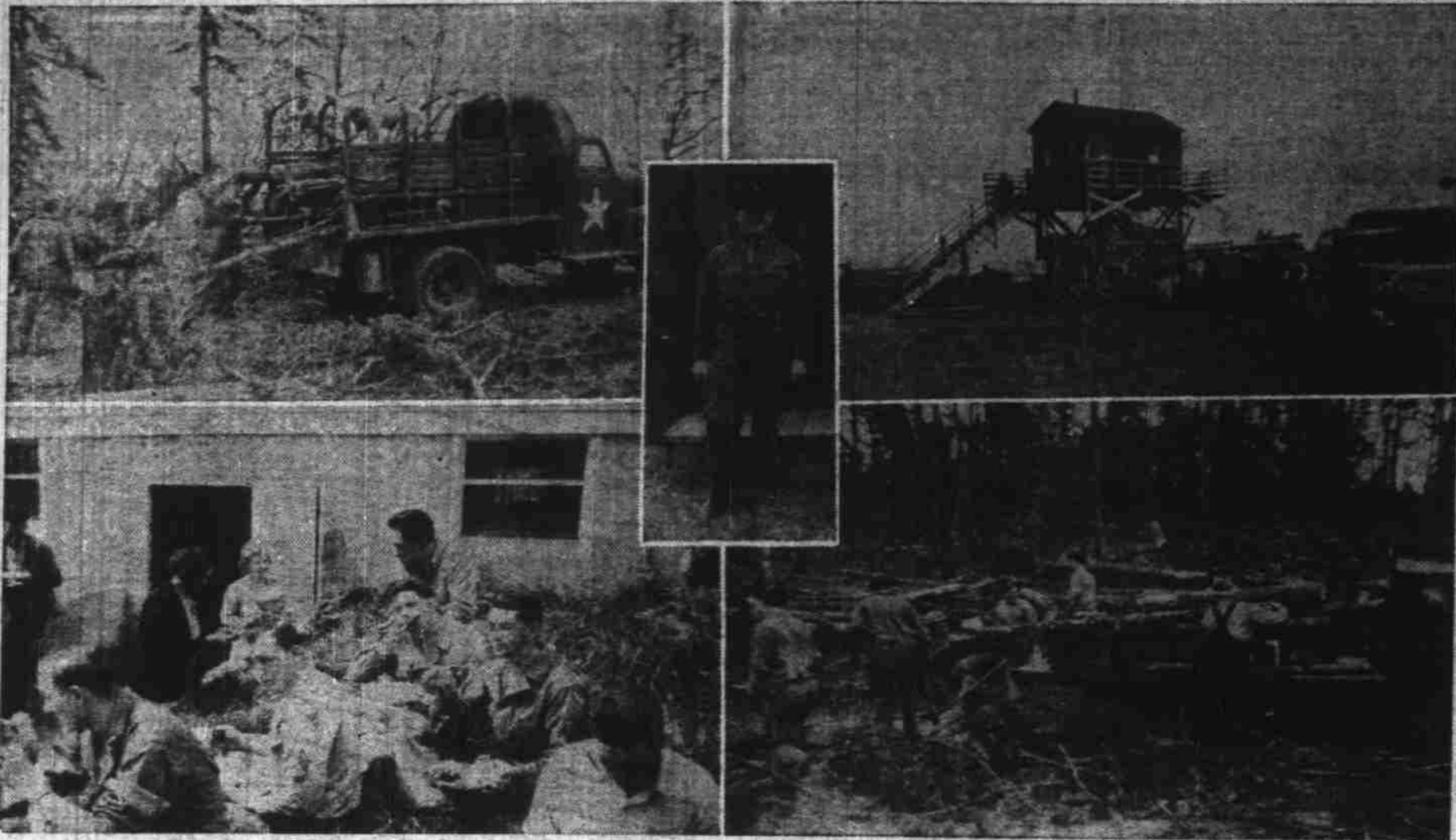
Central Howell held a pie social, which netted more than \$57 for the upkeep of its post. That social followed a program for observers, at which representatives of the fourth fighter command showed pictures and talked over problems of the aircraft warning service, of which the ground observation organization is an integral part.

Residents of Central Howell area are confident their money will be as well-spent at the post as it was at the schoolhouse for the tasty pies baked by women of the community. For Robert O. Bye is chief observer there, and is credited with having done "an excellent job in keeping the post in smooth operation." I quote Mrs. Raymond H. Werner, observer.

From the staff of observers there, Leonard Roth, Alfred Detwyler, Alvin Lund and Alvin Hallin have gone into the type of service where uniforms, are worn and weapons carried. Chief Observer Bye's wife and Mrs. Werner have 500-hour pins, which signify actual time on duty.

Almost every post actually consists of two buildings. The small, observation building proper is preferably on stilts so that the observer's eyes are some 23 to 25 feet above the ground, the ears well-removed from ground noises. At least one window is in each wall, and a catwalk of board-walk provides standing room when atmospheric conditions make outdoor observation necessary. Somewhere nearby is usually a privy, for most of the posts are located at some distance from other civilization.

Mill City's post buildings and furnishings were donated by the



Perhaps they liked to split wood at home, these army signal corps men who filled the army truck, upper left, and private truck, lower right, with wood donated by residents of the Spring Valley area, some of whom assisted, so that observation post, upper right, might be stocked with fuel for "the duration." After the job was done, women of Spring Valley fed the khaki-clad workers chicken, lower left. Among snapshots collected by observation post personnel on the Marion side of the river is that, center, of Capt. William Morgan, USA, signal corps, frequent visitor on aircraft warning service business.

mills there; the Mill City Manufacturing company supplies the fuel; Mill City Light and Power company, the lights and water, and the telephone company the telephone service.

Chief Observer J. F. Potter, himself an executive with a mill, is assisted by Gladys Mason, who was recently awarded the 500-hour pin. This award is remarkable because Mrs. Mason also maintains the city's telephone office in a manner which has earned for her more than local repute.

But all over the valley, women are carrying their share of the job. We asked Mrs. Tillie Waarvick, whom we found serving the Silverton post with Mrs. F. H. Tucker. "What do your families think about your giving three hours to this task each Sunday?" And she responded, almost sharply, "We don't ask 'em!"

Silverton has the newest, finest post in either Marion or Polk county. Octagon-shaped tower, it has electric lights and oil heat, and a new chief observer, R. B. "Bob" Duncan, congenial Silverton manager for the Stiff Furniture company.

C. J. "Cap" Towe, who served as chief observer when the post was first established, is a veteran of World War I, and, according to Justice of the Peace Alf O. Neilson, "fell so in love with the post location" that he has purchased a 100-acre ranch not far away where he is now raising turkeys by the thousands.

"Cap" knows from experience, observes Nelson, "that a gob of roost turkey goes mighty good with Uncle Sam's fighting men." Turkeys must have some appeal to chief observers, or perhaps observing has appeal for turkey raisers. Ivan Blosser, chief at the St. Paul post, has 5000 in training for the last Thursday in November.

Material for a new post was on hand when we visited the St. Paul site last week, and by today the stilts must have risen, with the aid of many hands. Based on the plans used in Clackamas county, the Mt. Angel building will be simpler than that at Silverton, but serviceable.

Welcome assistance of the neighbors has made the job at St. Paul a pleasure, declares Blosser and his dark-eyed wife.

"Harvest time? Oh, that's no



Wilbur McCune, Marion county district director of ground observation posts for the army aircraft warning service, organized this county for the task before Pearl Harbor.

problem. When people are the busiest they work the best!" Mrs. Blosser exclaimed in response to my questioning.

T. J. Hawkins, who has been teaching St. Paul high school's class in aeronautics, is to attend the special training class in Portland commencing in mid-June. Held by the army, the class, to be offered several times this summer, will draw one representative from each post, teaching among other things how to recognize different types of planes.

Today observers are asked merely to say whether the craft sighted is one motor or two, and are urged not to guess if they can't be sure of that.

Calling in the "army flash" message which takes precedence over all other use of any telephone line, the observer lists in order the number of planes, type (single, bi or multi-motor and color if these facts can be determined) altitude, either very low, low, high or very high, whether seen or heard, distance from the post and the direction in which heading.

No plane can fly over the Willamette valley and ever be out of sight and hearing of at least one post.

Not just to protect this country in case of enemy action—although the army today is convinced that a surprise air raid would be an

impossibility here because of the civilian-manned posts—but also as an aid in charting friendly flights, the posts have proved invaluable.

Not long ago you read in your newspapers the story of a couple of young soldiers who "stole" a plane. At no time, army authorities have revealed, were they ever "lost," for the observation posts reported and the filter centers charted their flight.

A plane crashed 10 nights ago near Eugene; the pilot's life is credited to the woman manning an observation post who called help and used her own first aid training.

First aid has not been required of the men and women who scan the skies and listen for the hum that is not the tractor in the field below or the singing of the wires just outside their windows.

"What is required is a devotion to duty, an understanding of the fact that if they and thousands of others like them did not work faithfully at their volunteer task, the army would today have to turn two divisions of fighting men into the observation posts of the Pacific coast alone. I take my statistics from Brig. Gen. Gordon P. Saville, director of air defense, Ft. Safford, Ariz.

Among those faithful are men like John Schallberger and Joe Schaecher, whom we found at the

Mt. Angel post last Sunday. Both are printers, one working at the Benedictine Press, the other in the shop of Chief Observer E. B. Stolle, editor and publisher of the Mt. Angel News.

Schallberger is a young man, whose fair-haired fiery-eyed small nose stood close to his knees as he told us how at the close of the last war he waited at the border of his native Switzerland, so anxious was he to leave war-torn Europe.

But his companion at the post has an equal interest in the current conflict. Schaecher has a son in the signal corps, and so he looked with almost homesick eyes at the signal corps insignia on the shoulder of my guide.

Nothing less than a World Almanac could list the men and women who serve their country in this quiet, unassuming way in Marion and Polk counties alone, were we to tell of the sons in the service, the past war records they themselves hold or the myriad other tasks they perform willingly. One post alone, to be properly manned should have 112 interested workers, ready to serve at least once every two weeks.

Mt. Angel is the only post with so many volunteers that they can serve just once a month, and to remind them of their dates, Stolle regularly prints a list of obser-

Wise... or Otherwise

By ETHAN GRANT

This may shock a few at least, but in my younger days I was a poet. Not in a class with Browning and Cowper and Longfellow, or even Robert W. Service, of course, but—well, in my own small poetic way. Especially could I wax poetic in springtime, when I was stirred by the owl and the whippoorwill and sometimes even the peacock or gander.

There are some who will say there is nothing poetic in a gander. All most persons can see in a gander is a waddling hunk of feathers with a tendency to hiss and honk. But if you will look closely, you will perceive rather easily that a gander possesses an intensely interesting sort of rhythm.

And you will always find something poetic in the staid old owl. For instance, I found this: The wisest old fowl Is the quaint old owl, Who sits and hoots all day, Does he give a hoot Or a root-a-toot-toot If it's March or June or May?

Poetry is always an interesting subject. But I do think much of it needs modernizing. For instance, Eugene Field's most popular poem, "Little Boy Blue," Little Boy Blue, Come blow your horn; The sheep are in the meadow, The cows are in the corn. Where's the little boy That looks after the sheep? Why, he's over in Tunis Driving a jeep.

Personally, I never cared much for Shakespeare's works, although I did find the study of his life a pleasure. There was so little of it. It seems that nobody really knew much about him. A few years ago a heated controversy arose over the authenticity of his writings. Some claimed he had an amanuensis, but it has always seemed to me his affliction was nightmares. In the study of his life, one of the most gratifying discoveries was that they dug his grave 17 feet deep. I've an idea it was dug by a group of upperclassmen who merely wanted to make sure. Neither a borrower nor lender be—

If your IOU's can do this to me! It's an odd fact, but the world almost never appreciates the poet. All the great masters either had independent incomes or went hungry. And of the lesser lights, only a few moderns managed to strike pay ore. Eddie Guest was a wealthy man, but not so much for his writings as for his invest-

ments. He owned a large share of a big newspaper. Ogden Nash—but is he a poet?

Suppose we write one in the Ogden Nash style and let readers decide for themselves. It needs a title, so we'll call it "After The Party."

AFTER THE PARTY
By Ethan Grant
I wish when my wife and I Have been dined and wine and the party is over, that she could say goodbye; I wish she would come straight home

And not leave me standing there In the night air with my uncovered dome, While she keeps saying it was nice, The things we've had, and how we've enjoyed the food and the games and how much she's won at dice— Which reminds her that she's left her purse.

And when she goes back inside to get it and comes out again she remembers her hat, which reminds me that her memory is getting worse.

Then, instead of saying no more, She keeps standing there and talking about everything today and yesterday and also the days of yore. And when finally I think she is ready to go, She remembers that she wants the recipe for the cake and wants to know

If she can have that, Then spends half an hour copying it, while I'm just standing patiently holding my hat, And listening to her and the crickets

And frogs and other creatures that sleep all day and stay up all night over in the thickets. And think of my hard day tomorrow. And how that when the party's at our house I'll have to help her with the fixings and be told to be careful and not break any of the dishes she's had to borrow;

And know I'll have to lie And say it's all right if the woman want to spend a whole week saying goodbye, Instead of going straight away From the party on the same day.

I sincerely hope Mr. Nash won't mind my aping him. Or that my wife doesn't get the idea I mean this.

Registrations Open for Observers

vacation post assignments as a feature of his paper. He didn't wait for volunteers, either when lining up his help. He and Mrs. Stolle merely went down the list of voters, got no kick-backs save when they "ordered" to duty a woman whose new baby (about which they had, strangely, not heard) was only two months old, or similar case.

Now that summer is here and vacation times approach, posts are seeking persons ready to learn the ropes, to serve as understudies and on call, replacing those who may leave their homes briefly to work elsewhere in harvest fields or take vacations.

Mrs. Blumenstein will take such registrations Wednesday night, and both Wilbur McCune, Salem, and Phil M. Schweizer, Monmouth, Marion and Polk district directors, will welcome a postal card notification if you are available. To these men falls the heavy burden of keeping posts going, although most chief observers have taken responsibility well.

McCune, appointed in the summer of 1941, organized the Marion county posts, establishing one in every area where the army ordered it.

Elmer Cook, West Salem, was the original district director for Polk, organizing posts there, but press of other duties made continuance of his service impossible and Schweizer is said to be doing a splendid job. Glenn Wick, with the county fire association is area supervisor for the western half of Polk.

Taken at random, here are some other chief observers, not otherwise mentioned here: Perrydale, Harold Stapleton; Independence, Tom Sharp; Stayton, Wendie Weddie; Aurora, William Haycox; Hubbard, Mrs. Forest Loop; Chemawa, L. E. Schulz; Scotts Mills, Carl Millard; Sublimity, Vern Scott; Liberty, Jessie Williams; Route 5, Salem, H. M. Kleen.

Salem alone has four who have earned the 500-hour pin. Mrs. Blumenstein, Mrs. Lucy Mitchell, Gerald Christofferson and Mrs. Wilbur McCune, while 72 have the 100-hour armbands. Included in that list to be published during the coming week in The Statesman, are representatives of most of the professions and the trades, a number of the offices of the state and private enterprise, merchants and housewives.

Perhaps the fact that more than 80 men in the armed services have close relatives serving that post has something to do with the continued service, these folks have given.

Out-of-Town Guests Attend Commencement At Jefferson High

JEFFERSON — Mr. and Mrs. E. B. Redmond of Sweet Home, attended the commencement program Thursday night. Their daughter, Gene Mary Redmond, was a member of the graduating class.

Mrs. Edith Anderson of Salem, and daughter, Mrs. Menalaks Seelander and Mr. Seelander of Oakland, Calif., were also present to see Mrs. Anderson's granddaughter, Ruth Terhune be graduated. Other out-of-town people present at commencement were Mrs. Charles A. Sprague and Miss Doris Miller of Salem, and Mrs. Charles Harvey of Portland, and Miss Barbara Colgan of Salem.

Holt Visits Relatives

JEFFERSON — Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Holt will leave Saturday by train for Santa Barbara, Calif., for a visit at the home of their son-in-law and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Julian Balitsky and son, John Michael. Balitsky is in the army, and is stationed in that city. Mr. Holt is foreman of a Southern Pacific bridge gang, and is having a vacation.

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Gardening Today

By LILLIE MADSEN

Daylilies are just making their appearance a few inches above the ground and so requests for information about planting them are also making their appearance.

Daylilies may be set out at almost any time but, as with most plants, there are special times which are considered "most proper." First of these is early spring before growth gets under way. The second time is in late summer just as the plants cease blooming.

However, I have seen them planted out in May or in June just before they came into bloom—and with good success.

Daylilies are not a fussy flower. They thrive nicely without any special care—or even without any care at all. Any ordinary garden soil seems good enough to make nice daylilies. And one will find them growing on dry rocky slopes or rather moist creek banks. As yet there seems to be no serious fungus disease bothering them. Perhaps this is yet to come.

As a rule, daylilies seem to thrive best in full sunshine or at least with only partial shade. A few of the so-called night-blooming varieties such as H. citrina and Hyperion fade rather badly in too much sun. They do not need to be reset every year. In fact, they do well if left alone for several years. When they become too crowded it is time to dig them up, throw away the dead roots and set out the best and youngest appearing ones.

There are many more varieties listed in catalogues than most of us realize until we begin an investigation. We frequently think of day lilies as consisting of but two or three varieties. I saw a list recently in which almost 50 varieties were mentioned. One expert advised a planting of at least 25 varieties if "the best were to be obtained." This list included ones that ranged in blooming time from early May until September. Among the early varieties listed were Dust, Apricot, Tangerine. Mid-season flowering sorts included Winsome, Aureole, Ajax, Mikado, Luteola, Cinnabar, Golden Dream, Royal, Tarouga, Vulcan. Later ones were Ophir, Hyperion, Margaret Perry, Star of Gold and Gay Day.

HORSERADISH: And now comes the question "Where can I get horseradish, is it easily grown, and how large does it grow? I have only seen it prepared in glasses. I have a bit of space, can find no old-fashioned horseradish on the market and want some."

And I thought horseradish was something one could always obtain, that everyone had some in a bit of garden or knew someone who had plenty of it growing along a fence row in the country.

The questioner rather intrigued me and I looked up some material on horseradish. I had always thought of it as something in the line of a relish, eaten like pickles or olives (not in shape but for the same reason.) Then my garden dictionary defines it as used "to tickle the jaded appetites of the overfed." A look at the ration book might have the same effect.

I find that many nurseries and seed houses do carry the roots. If you know of someone who has some growing in his back yard, starts can be had from root cuttings. Just dig a spade down, take up a bit of the plant, set it out and it will grow. However, whereas one thinks of horseradish as something which will grow in any garden soil, it does thrive much better in a rich loam. Digging and grating are best done in late autumn. We are told that it is best to dig and prepare a few roots at

a time, as the horseradish soon loses its pungency.

Four gardeners have written me this week to complain that their parsnips did not come up. They want me to tell them why. Not one of them tells me how long the seed has been in the ground, whether it was fresh seed or what type of soil they planted it in.

Parsnips are rather slow of germination, I believe earlier in the season, I repeated the information which had been given me by an expert vegetable gardener. He said to plant radishes with the parsnip seeds. The radishes would be large enough to use when the parsnips had a fair start on life. By pulling the radishes the parsnips were thinned out. The radishes mark the row long before the parsnips come up and permit the cultivation of the soil without disturbing the little parsnip seedlings. We are also advised to plant parsnips rather thickly. While not knowing how long the parsnip seeds have been in the ground, I would advise against digging up the soil again until at least three weeks have passed. I can report that my own parsnip seed was in 12 days. But I bought seed which was guaranteed to be of 1942 vintage.

One gardener writes that she had "wintered over her parsley, and the other day went out to get some to find that only the tops were left withering in the soil. The roots were all gone." My guess would be mice. Field mice are particularly fond of parsley. They ruined an entire 12-foot row of mine last year, before I discovered them at work.

Mrs. S. O. O. wants to know how early she can set out heliotrope without danger of frost. ANSWER: In an ordinary year, I would have said the first of May. But with frost this past week, I just wouldn't venture to guess. However, it is getting so late into the season, that frost or no frost, we are going to have to take a chance if we are to enjoy the plants out of doors this summer. Heliotropes like a rich soil and a sunny location. Protect them if possible from any east or north winds. Grown against a definitely southern exposure, they are exceptionally fine and give a delightful fragrance to the garden.

And now for the prize winning paragraph in my garden mail this week:

"It must be nice and peaceful to garden in the city," writes a country gardener, "where there are only an occasional stray dog or child to battle. Today has been a nightmare to me. The neighbor's cow ate off my early peas. Some stray horses trampled over my roses during the night. The sheep were sheared and the noise they make in again asserting themselves into families has made gardening almost unbearable. Oh, for the quiet and peace of city life!"

Reuben Jensens Visit Mother on Trip South

BRUSH CREEK—Reuben Jensen visited here briefly this week on his way south from Astoria. Mr. Jensen, who has been stationed in civilian work under Presidio direction, for the past four months is at Monterey. He previously taught for the past nine years at Astoria. He came north to bring his wife, the former Esther Girod, south with him. She has been teaching at Astoria this winter.

On their way south they stopped for a visit with Mr. Jensen's mother, Mrs. Anna J. Jensen here.

Czechs Hang Flag

SCIO — Scio Sokols, Czech athletic organization, has hung a service flag in the lodge hall here honoring several former members now in the armed forces.



His arm still in the sling, R. B. Baker of Independence received the award as "observer of the month" before the mike at radio station KOIN. Baker broke his arm cranking his car to go to the post, took time to have it set, and reported for duty only a few minutes late. With him is Johnny Carpenter, right, who made the presentation for KOIN.

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