

The Oregon Statesman

"No Favor Snags Us; No Fear Shall Awe"
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Steel on the Coast

One of the handicaps to industrial development on the Pacific coast has been the lack of cheap steel. This vital essential in most manufacturing enterprises has had to be shipped from Chicago or Pittsburgh or the Mahoning valley or Birmingham. As a result only such manufacturing using steel as was catering to a local market or which had a considerable profit margin through patent control was able to survive on this coast. Some motor companies had assembly plants in California but the parts were shipped from eastern factories. Some shipbuilding was carried on, but often some government allowance for extra cost was sought.

Now the west has two steel plants, in consequence of the war. The greatest is the Geneva plant in Utah, costing the government \$192,000,000, built and operated for the government by Columbia Steel, subsidiary to US Steel. Another is the Fontana plant near Los Angeles, operated by Henry Kaiser. The serious question which is giving concern to western industrialists is whether the end of the war will see the end of operation of these steel plants. Geneva is operating only at one-third of its annual capacity of 1,000,000 tons a year.

At a senate committee hearing in San Francisco a WPB official testified that the future operation of Geneva would be uneconomical on the basis of present consumption of steel. That has been the rub. Steelmakers of the east would say there was no room on the coast for a steel mill because consumption was too light; but consumers were hobbled from expansion here for lack of cheaper steel. However the situation is not hopeless. Present steel consumption on the coast, largely in shipyards, is at the rate of 6,600,000 tons a year. Pre-war consumption was 2,400,000 tons, and postwar consumption ought to be around 3,000,000 tons. While much of this may be in special steels like alloys, etc., it would seem that both Geneva and Fontana would have adequate outlets here, and that export trade in the Pacific would supplement local demand. The problem becomes one then of manufacturing cost. Geneva is a fine plant, located close to adequate supplies of iron ore, coal and limestone. The freight rate to the coast is a handicap, however, because it is all-rail, while Birmingham steel moves on a water route.

Benjamin B. Fairless, president of US Steel, is not at all optimistic in comments regarding the Geneva plant, but he does say that it might find a big market for tinplate. That is true, because the west uses enormous quantities of tinplate in the canning of fruits, vegetables and fish.

The west's concern over steel is also felt over aluminum. We have a partial aluminum industry here, but lack plants at both ends of the process: at the front end for producing alumina and at the rear end for fabricating aluminum. Likewise we have magnesium plants which stop with the magnesium billets or pigs.

The west does not want to depend on government subsidy for operating these plants; but since its future depends so much on provision of an ample supply of metals, western industrialists should make every effort to provide for their continued operation. The big eastern companies are well entrenched on the coast, and they may interfere with such a consolidated effort, if it is their desire to destroy these industries. In some way leadership of businessmen should be assembled representing the western states who will work cooperatively for the same development of our industry and particularly for saving these great metal plants for production.

Editorial Comment

From Other Papers

NORMAN NAMES

Somewhere in Normandy, General Sir Bernard Law Montgomery should run across the village that gave his family its name. Among the Norman nobles whom William the Conqueror bribed or browbeat into going with him on his raid on England was one Roger who, to distinguish him from other Rogers, was called Roger of Montgomery, from the village of which he was lord. Out of the loot in England, William rewarded Roger with the earldom of Shrewsbury. The English Montgomeries later acquired lands in Scotland and distinguished themselves in the Scottish wars against the descendants of William. It was one of them, John Montgomery, who personally captured Sir Henry Percy (Harry Hotspur), Earl of Northumberland, at the battle of Otterburn, when, as the ballad tells:

The dead Douglas won the field,
And the dead Percy was carried captive away.
The Percys of Northumberland likewise derive from the Norman village of Percy, just southwest of St. Lo. William of Percy, nicknamed Algoner, was one of the stoutest of the Conqueror's followers. It seems most illogical that Percy and Algoner are now regarded as silly names. Algoner means in the old Norman French "With the Whiskers," and this hairy Percy was a tough hombre indeed. It was because he was a most formidable fighter that William gave him lands in the rough-and-tumble north, where for centuries his descendants were conspicuous in the wars and battles of the Scottish border. Ever since the conquest to this day, some Percy of this redoubtable family has borne the name Algoner.

Then there are hereditary antagonists of the Percys in the border wars; the Scottish Douglases, who came with the Conqueror from the Norman village of Douglas—and one could go right on through a long list of famous British names and the Norman villages from which they came.—San Francisco Chronicle.

Death by Accident

With all the necessary sacrifice in war due to enemy action, it is most unfortunate that accident takes a heavy toll as well. The costliest accident to date is that in the loss of our Lieut. Gen. McNair by a bomb dropped from our own airplanes. This is admitted by Gen. Breerton, commander of the air force operating in Normandy, who says that our planes operating in the short run of helping ground troops, mistook their targets and dropped their bombs too soon. McNair was one of the casualties.

A transport plane operated by Pan-American for the navy crashed soon after its takeoff from a Pacific base and Rear Admiral Cecil and 18 other officers and men lost their lives. Recently a transport plane carrying wounded across the Atlantic failed to make the crossing and presumably is lost in the ocean. Then of course we read every few days of deaths by accident in the crashing of planes or from other causes at army posts and naval bases.

When men at war die they like to die facing the enemy, exchanging blow for blow. But those who die by accident, preventable though it be, are in truth war casualties, for they are using the lethal gear of war, taking unusual risks in training or in transport, and devoting their energies to the welding of victory. Nevertheless losses by accidental causes are most regrettable because of what seems like an unnecessary waste of talent.

Government Waste

Gen. Somervell promises an investigation of the reports first published in a Vancouver, BC, newspaper of burning and destruction of usable goods on the Alcan highway. Included in the list were such items in demand as sugar and mattresses. While under the agreement with Canada American goods needed for the construction job could be imported duty-free, provided they were not offered for sale, it would seem the goods would be worth transport back to the states, or could be turned over, for consideration, to the Canadian government instead of being destroyed.

Destruction is not confined to Canada. A Salem business man who visited Walla Walla recently reported seeing a tanker-truckload of gasoline for the army air base dumped on the ground because the tanks at the base were full. We have heard similar reports from the Boise airbase. Rather than sell the gas to private individuals or companies the war department wastes the gas while the public struggles along patriotically on A cards.

Enforcement in Santa Ana

Down in Santa Ana, Calif., a Free Methodist pastor who had a badge as special deputy sheriff, staged a one-man raid on the county's hot spots and confiscated 16 slot machines. When the raid was completed, what did the sheriff do? Why, he took his badge away from him! The instance reminds one of the Ashland police who arrested a man for breaking into the Elks club there and stealing the slot machine which had licked up his money the night before. In too many communities the enforcement authorities seem to be on the side of the slot machines instead of the law and the bilked public.

St. Louis is a good place this year for a political pow-wow. With the Cards and Browns leading their leagues, the politicians can take lessons from the baseball coaches.

Interpreting The War News

By KIRKE L. SIMPSON
ASSOCIATED PRESS WAR ANALYST

Names of French towns once familiar to Pershing's AEF are racing through the war news now as American armored power storms through Brittany toward the broad open valley of the Loire.

Brest, St. Nazaire, Rennes, Nantes, Angers, they all stir memories of another war. This fighting men from this side of the Atlantic passed that way to victory over another generation of Germans in 1917-18. Their sons and their sons' sons are wheeling their ponderous war chariots over the same road now against all but negligible enemy resistance.

It was up the Loire valley from Brest and St. Nazaire that Pershing's men moved to reach the Marne, the Meuse and ultimately the Rhine. The graves of thousands who fell then lie ahead, still in enemy hands to beckon this generation of Americans on. And they are answering the call, shoulder to shoulder again with British and Canadian comrades as Americans stood in France in that other war; but in greater numbers, with immeasurably greater striking power and at greater speed.

With American capture of Rennes, the crucial communications hub in Brittany, the fate of the great peninsula that thrusts westward into the Atlantic is sealed. An obvious first major objective of the allied incursion into France, once the bloody beaches of Normandy had been left behind, has been gained. At Rennes, or now probably beyond it enroute to its next goal, the fast-moving column which took the city in its stride is already churning the dust of the northern slopes of the Loire valley. The streams it crosses now all flow into the Loire. And up the Loire lies the great interior military highway across France from west to east, the longer but more open road to Berlin.

There is no definite hint yet of just how the foe hopes to meet the crisis in France, nor of allied preparations to exploit successes in Brittany that have obviously brought the whole invasion operation up to schedule. High allied staff spokesmen visualized a change even before the fall of Rennes of bringing the enemy to decisive action and complete defeat in the Vire-Orne sector.

It may be to keep such important channel ports as Le Havre out of allied hands that the foe has so concentrated his defense in the Orne sector. Or it may be under Berlin orders to hold them to the bitter end to protect robot bomb launching centers farther east behind the channel coast that Brittany was risked and lost.

Whatever the reason, the result has been allied success in expanding the front sufficiently to bring the whole weight of General Montgomery's ever increasing 21st army group into action simultaneously for the first time.



Eclipse

The Literary Guidepost

By JOHN SELBY
"LAKE SUPERIOR" by Grace Lee Nute (Bobbs-Merrill; \$3.50).

Up to the present, the American Lakes Series is holding up as well as any similar historical series now in progress. Grace Lee Nute's "Lake Superior" is a really fine job of research and organization, about a district which has strangely been neglected, and now may be overdue. It may be overdue because Miss Nute has opened up a hundred or more channels that may prove attractive to writers, once the authorial center of gravity moves westward across the Hudson river.

Anyway, Miss Nute has explained Lake Superior from the days of the Indian to this spring. Superior is a misnomer, of course. The French called it "le lac superieur," which only means "upper lake." By chance, Miss Nute points out, Superior was truly a superior lake in the English sense as well. It is not only the largest of the Great Lakes; it is the most dangerous, the most remote, the least well explored and the most like an ocean. There is no space here even to outline the complicated historical background through which the Lake was tossed back and forth among the French, the British and later the Americans.

Miss Nute has not accepted anything lazily, but has gone to sources for the entire story. And she has been very clever at digging up old records, particularly diaries — perhaps because she is curator of manuscripts for the Minnesota State Historical society and professor of history at Hamline university.

She has been very fair and frank about the exploration and similar adventures of the various missionaries, and her refusal to accept as a hero any old buzzard in a dirty shirt and a pediculous beard is rather refreshing. For me, the most interesting part of her story was the modern part, beginning with the exploitation of Superior's ore resources, and containing the story of the astonishing development of lake transportation down to date. There was even some news in this division — not many readers know how the new MacArthur lock

News Behind the News

By PAUL MALLON

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WASHINGTON, Aug. 3 — Treasury Secretary Morgenthau has sent flocks of revenue agents into the farm regions to check taxes, without making any public mention of the fact — an unseemly thing around election time. I have never been able to understand Mr. Morgenthau's philosophy on tax collections or the timing of the calls of his agents.

Several excellent objective political reporters, off duty, made a farm to farm tour of several farming sections lately for personal reasons, and came back with the report that it is more republican today than four years ago.

Even the dropping of Vice President Wallace is supposed to have cut two ways out there. While Wallace had identified himself almost entirely during his vice presidential term with coddling the left wing elements and running international errands for Mr. Roosevelt and his old AAA policies were distinctly unpopular, he had many friends remaining apparently out through that region, personal friends, presumably, of his farm journaling days.

The rest of the farmers' objection to the administration is red tape. They also think their prices have been held down while labor was permitted to gain.

As an example, the glut of hogs became such that the stockyards made the farmers get permits before sales. But the day the permit restriction was lifted, prices went up 35 cents a hundred. This made them think the claim of an overloaded supply, as an excuse for the permit

was rushed through at Sault Ste. Marie. Perhaps "Lake Superior" should be a must in American history classes for a while.

imposition, was wholly fictitious. Some weights of hogs have been sold at sacrifice prices, and, in many cases, farmers today are cutting down on their hog production, solely because of their experiences with the government management. If meat demand keeps up, the supply may be scarce next spring.

And another thing: the farmer sees the new deal still maintaining its AAA personnel throughout the country. In many county seats, these government employees, who formerly wrote checks for the farmers, have little or nothing to do. However, the man on the tractor has not noticed that anything has been done about transferring these government employees to places where they might be useful.

One wise old farm senator has looked back into the records and says no president has ever been elected in this country without the farm vote. Yet here is Mr. Morgenthau chasing the farmers on their income taxes. The taxpayer in the city finds his simple salary return so involved as to be practically beyond average comprehension. The farmer's returns are more complex to prepare without complete bookkeeping and considerable estimating.

I suppose a revenue worker knows how it should have been done properly could collect something more from practically all farmers. But what I cannot understand is why Mr. Morgenthau chose this time to stir up more horns in a political area where he well knows they are buzzing around just waiting for some place to alight.

Watch for the administration to lift from deep within a pigeon-hole in the file room the old guaranteed annual wage theory as a new boon to labor. It probably will be sprung in a speech by New York Senator Wagner or someone of his left labor views. Unless it contains some fresh trimmings to make it more desirable and practical to all labor, it is not apt to be of much value.

These two items of news which have come to me today show precisely what is wrong with this administration and apt to be wrong with its campaign. Mr. Morgenthau is bearing a stick into the hornets' nest and his cohorts are carrying honey to leftwing labor. If I were running the democratic campaign, I would turn it around and send the tax agents into the labor unions and some honey to the farmers.

Sunburn Gives Postal Clerk Day Off; Nylon Thieves Miss Nothing

DALLAS, Tex., Aug. 3 (AP)—A postoffice clerk had the answer when he was handed a card demanding an explanation for his absence of a day from work. "Sunburned so badly I couldn't wear my pants," he wrote on a card.

LOS ANGELES, Aug. 3 (AP)—Movie Actor Pat O'Brien told the police today burglars broke into his home and rifled six cases of scotch, clothing and jewelry. But worst of all, he said the thieves took seven pairs of Mrs. O'Brien's nylon hose.

Kenneth L. Dixon
... AT THE FRONT!

WITH THE AEF IN ITALY, July 24 (Delayed) (AP)—The boy who was going to die woke up in the middle of the night and called the nurse. He always did and she always came. His spinal cord was so injured that life for him was a matter of days — or weeks at the very most. We wondered if he knew. Except when the pain was worst he never complained, never talked much in the daytime. But at night when the others were asleep he and the pretty nurse would carry on a whispered conversation, their voices sounding like the soft words of lovers in the silence of the ward. She knew, and said she often wondered if he did. That night there was a pause in the conversation as she sat beside his cot. Most of it had been too faint to be heard but his slow question came clearly through the stillness: "How old are you?" "How old are you?" If she was startled she never showed it. "Thirty two," she replied, and she certainly didn't look it, even in the daylight. "How old are you?" "Nineteen," he said, and then after a moment he added: "That's funny; I thought I was older than you." "It is funny," she answered slowly, "I thought you were, too." A few minutes later he dropped off into the drugged sleep again and she left the ward. A few days later he died.

Inside Washington

WASHINGTON — The smashing victories of the Russian army are causing military authorities in Washington to revise their ideas as to the probable end of the war in Europe. Some experts think the German army may collapse as early as September.

It is no secret among Allied military men that Germany is in very bad shape, and that she is virtually defeated so far as any hope of waging a successful military campaign is concerned. However, the German army is expected to fight until the will to resist is knocked out, or if it and some conservative authorities therefore are wary about predicting the end. But an increase in "peace feelers" may be expected from now on.

General Ho Ying-Chin, chief of the Chinese general staff, and minister of war in the Chiang Kai-shek cabinet, believes the current Jap offensive in central China is part of the enemy's long-range strategy to assure an escape corridor for its forces in the southwest Pacific.

According to the general, the Japanese are attempting to cut an escape corridor from north China, which they occupy, to Canton, along the Canton-Peiping railroad, which they can use in the event their sea communications are cut. He points out that this strategy is the result of spectacular American successes at sea and in the air. Once American forces reach the Philippines, Jap garrisons in the Indies will be in an almost hopeless position.

The flying bomb has made it highly essential, in the opinion of many informed persons, that really effective machinery be set up and maintained to prevent another world war. Although the robots that are being dropped over England are discounted as of no real military value, the plain truth is that this new weapon is something which the future will have to reckon with.

It may not even dent British morale, coming at a time when Germany is already virtually beaten. But the future can scarcely take a chance, informed observers believe, on such an all-weather air force being unloosed suddenly upon helpless civilians.

The flying bomb, these observers say, should be of particular interest to the United States, because it has not merely narrowed but has erased the oceans. A barrage of 10-ton or larger robots directed against Manhattan by distant radio control is believed to be a definite possibility if there should be a World War III.

The belief is growing in military circles in Washington that American and Allied forces will be back in the Philippines much sooner than previously expected. Gen. Douglas MacArthur's forces now are less than 900 miles from Mindanao in the southwest Pacific and Admiral Chester W. Nimitz and his powerful fleet are only 1,400 miles away in the Marianas.

Thus developments indicate that American and Filipino forces may be fighting side by side again in the Philippines, probably weeks before the third anniversary of the Jap sneak attack.

OREGON CITY, Ore. (AP)—A hen owned by Mr. and Mrs. R. R. Maxwell took the wartime production program seriously. For months the bird laid standard sized eggs. Then it started laying super eggs, 9 1/4 inches around lengthwise, and eight inches across. After seven days of such production, possibly egged on by the fact her owners worked swing-shifts in a Kaiser shipyard, the hen died.

Stevens

BIRTH STONES

Beautiful Birth Stones Set in exquisite mountings. Some with small size diamonds.

Diamonds Resist While You Wait

Credit if Desired

"THE YOUNG IDEA" By Mossler



"Put yourself in the other fellow's shoes. Pop... How would you like to be conversing with the woman you intend to marry, and have YOUR father yell, 'Tommy, come right home and mow the lawn!'"