

A blue mark here means that you are behind with your subscription and you are asked to make a payment soon or the paper will be discontinued.

The Mount Airy News.

VOL. XL

MOUNT AIRY, NORTH CAROLINA, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 1918.

NO. 33

AMERICAN PLANES ON WAY TO FRANCE.

Secretary Baker announces departure of first consignment of air fighters—Need now is for more skilled mechanic

Washington, D. C.—The following statement is authorized by the Secretary of War in order to give as complete a picture as is permissible under military requirements of the problems and the progress in equipping the air service with fighting planes:

The first American built battleplanes are today en route to the front in France. This first shipment, though it itself not large, marks the final overcoming of many difficulties met in building up this new and intricate industry.

These planes are equipped with the first Liberty motors from machine production. One of them, in a recent test, surpassed all records for speed and climbing for planes of that type. Engine production, which began a month ago, is now on a quantity basis and the peak of production will be reached in a few weeks. Only the 12 cylinder type is being made, as developments abroad have made it wise to concentrate on the high-powered engine instead of the eight-cylinder.

These statements should not be exaggerated, but should be considered in the light of the following facts: After three years of warfare the total number of planes able to take the air at any one time on either side of the western front has not been over 2500. This, combined with the fact that 46 men are required on the ground for every plane in the air, gives a truer perspective of the European aviation situation than commonly possessed. For every plane in the air, there must be two replacement planes on the ground, and one training plane for every pilot who eventually reaches the front, with a spare engine for each plane. Moreover, while the American program has been delayed by difficulties which were impossible to foresee when the tentative program was adopted in all our lack of knowledge last spring, it may be said that American planes are not due in France under the original schedule until July.

At the outbreak of war, the first step both in sequence and importance, was to build up an industry to rush out the training planes needed for the prospective aviators who were immediately on hand. This fresh and most promising personnel afforded, indeed, America's largest immediate source of aid to her associate nations in the war, which, while well able to turn out the latest type of air-planes, were seriously drained of men capable of manning them. The ultimate goal, however, was the construction of a large fleet of battleplanes.

The serious problems, interwoven and reaching, were immediately met. The almost total lack, both of airplane industry and of airplane engineering knowledge. The industry was rudimentary with only one company of an appreciable production basis and another dozen small experimental companies. The metal work was mostly done by hand, each machine built as a separate unit and little attempt made to manufacture from dies, jigs or gauges. The estimates of the total value of the industry varies from \$2,000,000 to \$10,000,000 and of employees from 5000 to 10,000. The government was practically the only purchaser, having ordered 366 planes the year before the war, of which 66 were actually delivered.

The engineering problems were even more complex. Europe at war, with the best engineers of each country pitted against each other in a struggle which knew no close had worked out the most ingenious developments in the light of actual fighting experience. Information reaching here was generally frag-

mentary and always late. As a result, when war came the United States had practically no airplane engineering staff and no modern fighting planes.

Construction of planes proved a much more complex problem than that of engines, which had been developed and produced here for other purposes on a colossal scale. The extreme refinement of their manufacture, requiring 23,000 screws in a single fighter, of 700 pieces of wood in a single wing, necessitating the most expert workmanship and balance to secure the essential combination of lightness and strength and seemed to militate against quantity production. The first step was to secure information from Europe. A commission was early sent across and rushed back the last-minute details, upon the strength of which a large number of fighting planes of certain type were ordered. The raw materials were very largely in hand, and the drawings within several days of completion, when another cable said that this type had been superseded and should not be built. Nearly a month was thus lost.

Drawings then came for another type. They had just been redrawn for an American manufacturer and the diemakers put to work when the second and different set arrived. The work done had to be cast aside and the process begun over again just as it was nearing completion. Still a third set of drawings arrived and a third start was necessary to reduce these samples to drawings for American manufacturers. It is significant of the rapid development of the art of aviation that not a single type of the original schedule has survived into the present program.

During the past month, however, a responsive channel of communication with the Allies has been opened, the latest types adapted to American manufacture, the industry increased at least twentyfold the training plane problem solved, and the production of battleplanes begun. It is still very necessary however, to view America's effort in aviation against the true perspective. Both in this country and in Europe the great problem now remaining is to secure the thousands of skilled mechanics, engine men, motor repair men, wood and metal workers, etc., needed to keep the planes always in perfect condition. This great engineering and mechanical force at the airdromes, the flying fields and the repair depots, both here and behind the lines in France, is a vital industrial link in the chain to air supremacy. Without them the planes turned out would soon be useless and the flyers helpless.

At best, the life of a plane is but two months, and the engine must be overhauled every five hours, while a pilot on a plane allowed to leave the hangars in imperfect condition is as helpless as a bird with a broken wing. Now that American battleplanes are going overseas, a great increase in the volunteering of skilled mechanics is both essential and expected.

W. S. S.

Vagrancy Law Not Properly Enforced.

Charleston, W. Va., Feb. 20.—The West Virginia vagrancy law passed at the last session of the legislature as a war measure, is not being properly enforced, it was declared today by Governor John J. Cornwell in a statement issued to the press, in which he calls on the newspapers to help create a public sentiment to back up the statute's enforcement.

The governor says: "I have prodded the officials in the cities and towns time and again, often only to be reminded that no one will file affidavits of the offenders. The law should and must be enforced vigorously, and nothing but public sentiment will bring about a proper enforcement. I cannot create this sentiment in favor of enforcement. The newspapers can."

"Y" TRUCKS IN WAR.

New York, Feb. 23.—"A worn-out 1913 flivver costs \$1,200 in France today, and is cheap at the price. The life of a car used in carrying supplies for soldiers in not more than three months on the average. There are almost no repair shops, and there aren't even tools available in France.

This sums up a few of the difficulties in the problem that the Young Men's Christian association is facing in France at present, in getting food and other supplies for the soldiers to its canteens, according to W. O. Wilson, secretary in charge of transportation, attached to its headquarters staff in Paris. He has come to America to make arrangements for a great system of Young Men's Christian association service stations and repair shops in France to get more cars, and to secure a number of expert drivers and mechanics.

"The war is sometimes almost a war of transportation," Mr. Wilson said, at the International Young Men's Christian Association building, 124 East 28th street. "Our army is scattered through many villages instead of being in centralized cantonments as it is in America. The problem is therefore doubled in size and importance. After having studied divisional distribution and distribution at the front, I have come back to America to get together an organization that will be prepared to face and overcome almost insurmountable difficulties.

Five Hundred Cars Needed.

"The Young Men's Christian association has approximately 100 cars in France at the present time. These consist of cheap American automobiles, two or three-ton trucks, and Italian, French, and English cars. Sending automobiles from America to France costs real money, yet the association must have from 300 to 500 cars there by spring or early summer to carry on its work.

"One can get an idea of what we are up against by the fact that the French government is building 1,250 of the Foyers du Soldat, or 'Y' huts for the French army, and an American division of 27,000 men is scattered at many points. These French 'Y' huts will be in charge of the American Young Men's Christian association.

"When the soldiers of a division are at from 30 to 50 different points it means that the lines of communication between each of these and the Young Men's Christian association division or base headquarters must be kept open, and that tons of supplies must be transported to each unit. The activities of a hut depend upon the transportation department.

"The Young Men's Christian association is rapidly organizing a thorough and efficient repairing service system, with small emergency shops almost at the front, larger ones to the rear of these, and completely equipped machine shops and service stations at the larger bases.

Best Mechanics are Going.

"Car parts and tools, as well as the cars themselves are being shipped to France in large numbers. A great many of the drivers and repair men who will be at these new service stations will also go soon. They are the best of their kind that the association can get. We have found that the best drivers and repair men are none too good to go up against the critical tests over there.

"When the 'Y' trucks roll into a village, and some one yells 'The 'Y' is here!' the driver and truck almost need a bodyguard for a time. The hut secretary has to come down and calm the men by saying:

"'Boys, I'll open the canteen at 3 o'clock, and I'm afraid you'll have to wait till then.' At 3 o'clock the whole camp has heard of the arrival of the truck, and the poor old canteen is once more almost demolished."

The daily and weekly movements of every Young Men's Christian association car and driver are known at

any given moment to the transportation department of the association in Paris. Large charts hang on the wall there, showing the approximate positions of each car and driver. The needs of the individual divisions are constantly known at the headquarters. The cargo of every car is checked and inspected by the stores department, and thus each truck is sent on its way in an explicit and definite order.

Not a Drop Wasted.

Gasoline or essence as the French call it, is controlled in a very complete and efficient way, so that not a drop is lost. Each truck driver and truck master is provided with a book issued by the government authorities which is honored throughout France at the many essence depots. The driver need only present his little book to the Frenchman in charge, who pours out, very carefully, just so many litres of the valuable fuel.

"We learn much from the French and the English systems of mechanical transportation," Mr. Wilson remarked. "A long train of the great 'camions,' with its quota of 40 to 45 jolius is able to make an average speed with a full load of nine and a half miles an hour. This is rapid transportation of soldiers. In more than one instance the great motor 'lady' has saved the day for both the French and the English. The roads of France are splendid, and are well kept up, but they are now beginning to show wear under the extreme heavy traffic of the truck squadrons.

"We must look to the motor truck more and more during this war. The French railroads are doing splendidly to handle the enormous traffic demanded by our army and the Young Men's Christian association, and it is not to be expected that they will be able to continue to do all this as the problems of the war increase. In many cases, getting both food and news of the outside world to the association huts can be accomplished only through the motor trucks. Transportation is one of the most vital problems of the war.

To Serve the Soldier.

"It is only because we wish to serve the soldier that we seek to help him by keeping the trucks running, the lines of communication open, and a bit of home available for the men as they go forward, no matter how uncomfortable the task of doing it may be."

Mr. Wilson was formerly executive secretary of the Young Men's Christian association, at the Great Lakes Naval station and previous to that time had much experience in the motor car business.

W. S. S.

Hen and Pullet Order Plain

Raleigh, Feb. 16.—There has been considerable confusion as a result of the published order of the food administration affecting the trade in live and freshly dressed hens and pullets. According to State Food Administrator Henry A. Page this order does not affect local trade in North Carolina, since it applies only to licensed dealers, principally the cold storage concerns.

Every owner of a flock of poultry is being urged as a patriotic duty to refrain from selling for slaughter any hens or pullets. Every hen that is sold before the 1st of May will represent a food loss to the nation of an average of not less than 30 eggs. If the average number of hens and pullets usually sold from February 1 to May 1 is sold this year it will cause an aggregate loss of 150,000,000 eggs. The value of these eggs is 80 percent to 100 percent of the actual value of the hens. The program being urged by the food administration and the department of agriculture will not entail a loss to the farmer but an actual gain.

The co-operation of all consumers of poultry products is also requested. They are asked to forego the use of fowls on their tables during the next few weeks except male stock.

Interned Aliens Caught in Ruse

Salt Lake City, Utah.—As a matter of discipline, Col. George L. Byram, commandant of the third war prison camp at Ft. Douglas, has had the civilian German prisoners dig open from the surface of the ground their recently-discovered escape tunnel, and fill it again with earth hauled in wheelbarrows from outside the prison camp.

The prisoners put in a long hard day, digging, hauling, tamping and filling the tunnel and ditch to the satisfaction of the prison authorities.

It was a well-chastened group that tamped the last shovelful of earth into place, but when the work was done the prison authorities knew that the tunnel was filled.

When the latest tunnel was discovered recently the civilian prisoners were prompt in their proffers to fill it up. Colonel Byram smiled and accepted the offer. The prisoners, with much show of energy, "filled the tunnel." The colonel soon after ordered all prisoners out with shovels, picks and wheelbarrows. He directed that a trench be dug from a certain point under one of the buildings to another point toward the fence. He directed that it be dug to a depth of about five feet.

When this depth had been reached the diggers broke through into an open space. It was the tunnel. The work disclosed that the prisoners had merely filled up the end of the tunnel and left the rest of it open, possibly for future use.

As the unfilled tunnel came into view the colonel gave additional orders the day hauling earth from the hill outside the compound and tamping it solidly into the tunnel and trench until it was completely filled.

W. S. S.

Welfare of Federal Employees in Washington.

Washington, D. C. Feb. 25.—The Federal Government is not only giving close attention to the matter of the proper housing of its new appointees in Washington, but the general welfare of the employees is now considered in greater measure than ever before. Many of the young people who have come to Washington for war work are hundreds even thousands of miles from home for the first time in their lives. They are strangers in a strange land, and it is not to be wondered at that they become homesick and magnify the trouble that they are bound to meet during the period of adjustment to new conditions. The department heads realize that a good clerk must be a contented one, and many offices have appointed welfare workers whose business it is to take an unobtrusive interest in the affairs of the employees and to try to help them with their difficulties. Experiments along this line have had such good results that the number of offices which employ welfare workers is increasing.

Since the war began about 25,000 employees have been added to the civil service in Washington, D. C. The United States Civil Service Commission, whose duty it is to recruit this branch of the service, estimates that this calendar will add another 20,000. Stenographers are being appointed in great numbers. There is also need for clerks, both men and women, who are trained in certain special or technical lines, ship draftsmen, mechanical draftsmen and workmen in trades connected with shipbuilding. The representatives of the civil service commission at the post offices in all cities are prepared to furnish definite information and application blanks.

W. S. S.

A Hint to the Aged.

If people past sixty years of age could be persuaded to go to bed as soon as they take cold and remain in bed for one or two days, they would recover much more quickly, especially if they take Chamberlain's Cough Remedy. There would also be less danger of the cold being followed by any of the more serious diseases.

W. S. S.

Chamberlain's Tablets.

These Tablets are intended especially for disorders of the stomach, liver and bowels. If you are troubled with heartburn, indigestion or constipation they will do you good.

WAR GARDENS.

Plant a Garden—Close Stores Early so Clerks Can Make a Garden.

Raleigh, Feb. 25.—War gardens in North Carolina last year saved North Carolina consumers \$12,000,000 to \$15,000,000 which otherwise would have been spent for food products imported into the state from other sections and, in the opinion of health experts, saved tens of thousands of dollars in doctors' bills by improving the general health of the people through the increased variety in their diet.

"More Gardens and better Gardens" is the motto for this year, and with the forces of the Food Administration and the Agricultural Extension service behind the movement there should be a further increase of several million dollars in the aggregate value of garden products.

State Food Administrator Henry A. Page calls upon the merchants of the cities and towns of North Carolina to adopt early in the season the policy of early afternoon closing and at least one half-holiday each week so as to enable all employees to cultivate gardens. A uniformed policy of early closing and of a half-holiday one or two days during the week would not reduce the quantity of goods sold in any degree, and would result not only in an increased number of and production from gardens, but would result in better health and more efficient work by employees in such stores.

The policy was adopted in the city of Raleigh and some other cities and towns of the State last year with wonderful results and it is expected that it will become a uniform and a universally adopted practice throughout the State this summer. Mr. Page is particularly anxious that it should be adopted in the various towns early enough to enable all clerks and other employees to prepare their gardens and have them seeded as early as the weather will permit.

Garden bulletins and plans may be secured from the Agricultural Extension Service at Raleigh without cost.

W. S. S.

Will Make Airplane Parts in High Point.

High Point, Feb. 25.—One of the largest of the furniture manufacturing plants of the city, which means one of the largest and best equipped in the entire section, has started on the manufacture of airplane parts for the United States government. Naturally, at the start, the output of each day is not large, as the officials of the company have determined to ascertain just what can be done toward helping the government secure the great fleet of airplanes with which it is hoped to end the war.

Propeller blades are being made at this one plant and while officials are not willing to talk, it is understood that for each pair furnished the government pays the sum of \$90. This does not mean two separate propellers but two blades for those important parts of every plane. The best of wood must necessarily be used in the construction of the parts, and as experienced wood workers are numerous in and about the city, it is expected that other plants will follow suit.

Although the actual manufacture of propeller blades was started but a day or so ago, the plant has been making a quiet test of special machinery for the past several months in order to ascertain just what can be done. It is expected that the output can be increased from day to day as the workmen grow more familiar with the machinery and the requirements of the government in material such as they are engaged in turning out.

W. S. S.

Chamberlain's Tablets.

These Tablets are intended especially for disorders of the stomach, liver and bowels. If you are troubled with heartburn, indigestion or constipation they will do you good.