

The Mountaineer

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 The County Seat of Haywood County

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THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 1944
 (One Day Nearer Victory)

The Trend In Air

The Civil Aeronautics Board is said to have applications for permission to establish new routes, domestic and foreign lines, of 400,000 miles as compared with 81,000 miles before the war.

Domestic air travel with a little over 1,000,000,000 miles in 1940. It is estimated that it will be 10,000,000,000 miles by 1955. In 1940 there were 400 commercial planes in the United States out of 1,200 in the world. It is estimated that by 1955 there will be 15,000 commercial planes in the United States.

Good Newspapering

As one who gave Curtis Russ his first training in the newspaper business, I have to take off my hat to him and his associate, Marion T. Bridges, of Waynesville. At the State Press Convention in Chapel Hill last week the paper which they recently purchased and rejuvenated at Sylva was awarded a war bond for being the best weekly with a circulation less than 1,500 and their older paper, The Mountaineer, at Waynesville, took second place among the better weeklies of the State with circulations over 1,500. They also received honorable mention for the splendid special edition in memory of the men in service that they published a few months ago. Congratulations for such honors that don't come a publisher's way every day.—The Tribune, Hendersonville.

Congratulations, Neighbor

There are some mighty good weekly and semi-weekly newspapers published in Western North Carolina and this fact is given further proof by reason that several state press association prizes were won by papers up here in the hills. Our next door neighbor, the excellent new "Sylva Herald", steps out and takes first award in the General Excellent Contest in the weekly division of under 1,500 circulation. Then comes along The Herald's publishers, also publishers of The Waynesville Mountaineer, and take second award in the weekly division for papers over 1,500 circulation. The first prize in this division was won by The Elkin Tribune, also a mountain published weekly.

Congratulations, Mountain publishers!—Bryson City Times.

Honor To W. N. C. Journalism

The Sylva Herald has just been awarded first prize for general excellence out of a group of weekly newspapers with a circulation under 1,500. The award was made by the North Carolina Press Association in Chapel Hill last week, during the annual mid-winter institute, being an annual event sponsored by that Association. The Waynesville Mountaineer, also published by W. Curtis Russ and M. T. Bridges, received second prize for weeklies with circulation over 1,500.

We congratulate our neighboring counties of Jackson and Haywood on the high standard of the county newspapers which they enjoy. And especially are we happy to felicitate our good neighbor, Mr. Russ, who has won and deserves the honor which has been bestowed upon the newspapers of which he is editor.—The Franklin Press.

Bad Penny

We read with relief that the last "bad penny" of steel has been minted by the government. It seems that there have been so many protests from business and private citizens that the government decided to stop the minting of this confusing piece of money.

The 700,000,000 steel pennies which are now in circulation will remain so until after the duration. The "bad penny", born of wartime shortages of copper are not exactly a hardship, but they are very annoying. They have also caused a lot of wasted time. Watch somebody try to pay for something that calls for a dime or a penny and they will look and finger the steel coin to make certain, and if they don't take that precaution, they are more than likely to get the coin back from the clerk, with the sympathy about the mistake made.

They Are Watching Us

Did it ever occur to you how many angles there are to the success of the Fourth War Loan Drive? Naturally we all think of the fact that the government is needing the money to continue the fight for world freedom and the safety of our great nation, but there are many other reasons why we should go over the top with high figures.

The manner in which the American people come across in this drive is being watched by men all over the world, by the boys from every state in the union, from North Carolina and from our own county. They are serving in the air forces in the navy; they are marching in mud in North Africa and Italy; they are fighting from fox holes; but they are watching to see what you and I back home in comfort are going to do about raising this large sum asked by the government.

The invasion of Europe will be the costliest affair the government of this country has ever undertaken, according to the authorities. It will cost also much in the figures of human life, but if we are generous even the last will not be so great.

These men who are watching us, they need assurance that we will not fail them. The way we meet this obligation will either discourage our fighting forces or will boost their morale. Let us show them how we feel. Let us give this new evidence of how solidly we support and appreciate their efforts. Let us take advantage of this latest opportunity to serve our country on the home front.

Billions Wasted

A local minister asked that we reprint the following editorial from the Christian Science Monitor:

The professional wets—those whom the liquor people hire to conduct their organizations and to disseminate propaganda attacking the cause of temperance—frequently refer to the taxes paid by the makers and distributors of intoxicating beverages as though this were a primarily constructive effort rather than a mere salvage from a gigantic waste.

"Our industry," said a speaker at the national Tavern Keepers' Association convention in Cleveland last week, "paid the Government over a billion dollars in taxes in the last fiscal year."

A billion dollars sounds like a lot of money even in this day of astronomical calculations at Washington—but consider this:

The gigantic sum of \$4,750,000,000, it is estimated, was spent by the American drinking public for alcoholic liquors during the same period.

Nearly five billion dollars! Think of what might have been done with this sum if devoted to the war effort.

It would have bought more than one-third of the entire Fourth War Loan bond issue.

It could build and equip 47 battleships the size of the new super-sea fighter Missouri—the chief weapons depended upon to defeat Japan.

It could pay for 19,000 giant bombers—the chief weapons now employed in battling Germany into submission.

The professional wets can be depended upon to put the emphasis on the wrong set of figures.

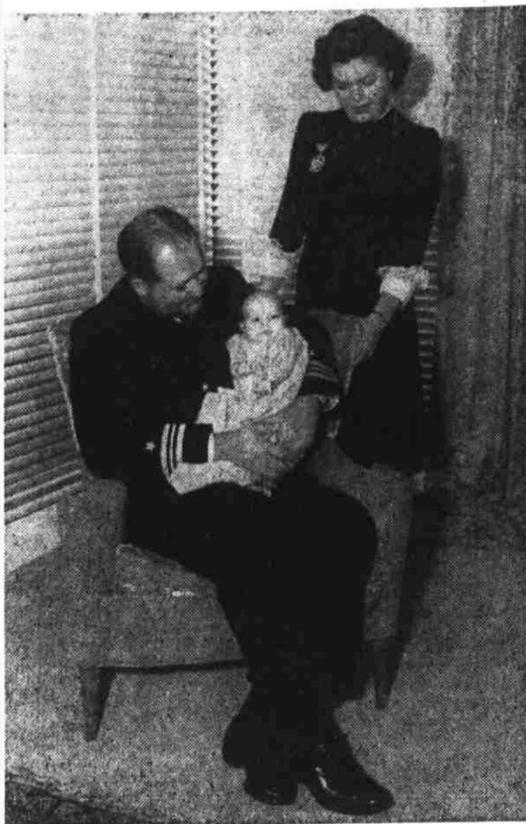
Seventy per cent of the American women were wearing silk underwear before the war, according to statistics. Aren't some statisticians the nose guys!

Lots of girls are becoming pharmacists' mates in the WAVES. Guess almost any girl can turn out a pretty good sandwich.

It's strange how a lie can travel so fast when it hasn't a leg to stand on.

HERE and THERE

By
 HILDA WAY GWYN



COMMANDER JOHN ELLIS EDWARDS, with Mrs. Edwards and their son, John Ellis, Jr. The photograph was taken at their home in San Diego about a year ago.

We have found out that if you can keep up your spirit of determination long enough, you can usually whip Fate into giving you what you want. . . For sometime, naturally more keenly since Pearl Harbor, we have been wanting to interview Jack Edwards, Waynesville high school football player, who has carried his ability to hold back his opponents on the local gridiron . . . on to Annapolis, with the same winning ways . . . and during the past fourteen years to many tough and out of the way spots of the world. . . He has been so modest about it all, that most of us here don't know that he is a hero. . . That is the reason we have had so much trouble tracking down any information about the present Commander Edwards, U. S. Navy. . . We have met his mother time after time . . . and we would say, "Now Mrs. Edwards how about telling us something about Jack. . . I hear he has had a promotion . . . or that he is now in the South Pacific area" . . . and her answer would always be, "Now, Mrs. Gwyn, I would love to tell you. . . You know how mothers are, but Jack won't let us even put his picture in the paper with the other boys, much less tell what he is doing. . ." (Right here we want to inform you that when the Commander sees the above picture he is headed for one grand surprise. He hasn't the faintest idea we have it. . . We wouldn't dare take advantage of his feelings if the picture did not include Mrs. Edwards and their young son, taken a year ago . . . but we believe under the circumstances he'll have to forgive us). . .

Commander John Ellis Edwards, son of Mrs. Lily Gouge Edwards, and the late Tom Edwards, of Waynesville, has recently been granted a 60-day leave from his duties in combat areas. He asked for 30 days and the Navy added 20 because they felt he deserved it. . . Commander Edwards is a graduate of the local high school . . . after which he attended Annapolis preparatory school prior to entering Annapolis, from which he was graduated in the class of 1930. . . During the 14 years since, with the exception of two years in which he did post graduate work at Annapolis, he has been on sea duty. Today we find him in command of a destroyer . . . and he has been in the thick of things as attested by the array of ribbons and stars on his uniform. . . He is eligible to wear nine stars, for participation in nine major combat areas . . . including the Yangtze Valley Campaign, of 1932. . . Asiatic-Pacific theatre . . . American area . . . and a bronze star for service before Pearl Harbor. . .

His latest award was the silver star medal given him for conspicuous gallantry in action in the Attu invasion. As Skipper of a destroyer, Comdr. Edwards was in charge of the fire-control vessel in one area where landing craft were being guided through fog and hazardous waters to the beaches. Later his vessel provided effective close-range bombardment in support of American ground troops advancing against the Japanese (this information incidentally was given us by his family from official records).

Knowing how we would like to share the interview with the public . . . Commander Edwards said at once. . . "You know Mrs. Gwyn, there is little I can tell you about things, at least to appear in print, because we cannot be too careful. You don't realize that small-town papers are combed through for information that might be used by the enemy. . . As an example, during the First World War, an English agent wanted to get word back to England where a certain German General was stationed. . . He got the story in a small-town German paper, regarding the decoration of a man in service by the General, giving the location. . . In less than a week that news leaked back to England. . . and the German General's hiding place was known. . . It is the same way with information about our ships. Of course I can tell you lots, but not to go in print. . ."

"The American people think the war will soon be over, but they are wrong. . . I think their attitude is due to the general American spirit of optimism. . . I believe that this war will be the toughest, however on the mothers and the wives. . . From the time I left harbor until I come back to the homeland shore, I know my family worries about me. . . While we in the service are so busy that we don't have time to worry. . . One thing, I would like to warn the public is about . . . that is to prepare for heavy casualties, for we are going to have them before it is over."

We asked him about the most dangerous and hardest spot he had been in since the war started and this was his answer. . . "It was a decision I had to make, and it happened only a few months ago in an important combat area. . . We did not know where the front lines were. . . Headquarters did not know. . . I had to decide whether or not to fire ahead. . . it might be into our own lines, or it might be our enemies. . . The time was short. . . we must act. . . But somehow I felt it right to fire. . . and we did. . . and it turned out to be the enemy lines. . ."

"You must have luck with you," we said. . . "Yes," he answered. . . "As long as my wife prays and I keep my luck piece I will make it." We inquired about his lucky token . . . and he showed it to us. . . It is a silver locket, with two pictures, one of his wife and the other of his son. . . "When we are in combat I get out this luck piece and hold it in my hand. . . Sometimes two or three days after the battle is over I find a green stain left from my holding on to that piece so tightly. . . My men understand. . . and in the thick of things, someone will call to the bridge and say, 'Skipper have you got your luck piece with you. . . it seems to give them courage. . .'"

In speaking of Attu he told how the U. S. Fighter planes going into action dropped their extra fuel tanks when 18 Jap planes attacked their ship and how a red headed signalman saw them drop torpedoes and remarked. . . he was glad he was not on the island, for they were going to get Hell. . . and then he said, "My God, they are underway."

But with all the fast moving experiences of the past several years. . . across the world. . . Commander Edwards still keeps green in his memory the days of his boyhood here. . . and during his recent visit accompanied by his wife and young son with his mother and sister. . . he spent lots of his time out in East Waynesville where the family lived, hunting up the neighbors he had known. . . In fact we were surprised at how well he had kept up with things. . . we wonder if most people here at home have read the local news for the past years as he has. . . He has kept up with us here. . . and when the day arrives for his retirement from the Navy, he expects to turn his car in this direction, or perhaps it will be his plane. . . for coming into port will mean home back in the mountains, according to the Commander. . .

We did not realize how cut off a man can be from his family when

Inside WASHINGTON

Record-Breaking Production Of Ships, Planes This Year | Jap Fleet's Reluctance Clash With Us a Real

Special to Central Press

WASHINGTON—Looking ahead into this new year of Washington can promise the American people continued record-breaking production of planes and fighting ships, about the amount of food they had in 1943, and at least a slight easing of tight supply of consumer goods.

The heaviest accent on war production as the nation enters third full year of conflict will be that on planes and naval vessels which will account for about two-thirds of all battle manufacturing.

Planes are expected to reach a rate of 10,000 in production a month for a 120,000-a-year total, compared with 85 to 86 thousand delivered in 1943. Artillery ammunition and heavy truck production will be up.

Production of equipment for the ground army will be reduced in 1944, according to plan, and construction of Army bases and installations will drop to a third of the 1942 rate because most of this work now has been done.

As for food, the war food administration insists that American diets in 1944 will equal nutritionally and quantitatively that of the world when Americans remained the best-fed people in the world. There will be slightly less meat, butter, cheese, canned fruits and vegetables; about the same amount of fluid milk, more eggs, poultry, potatoes, sweet potatoes, citrus fruit and cereal products.

The WPB has promised that any time critical metal becomes available it will be turned over in 1944 to civilian uses. Electric washing machines and mechanical refrigerators, have been promised in strictly limited production this year and the WPB office of civilian requirements is expected to do something about the lack of alarm clocks.

AS SHIPS OF ALL TYPES slide down the ways and join the United States Navy in unprecedented numbers, American fleet supremacy in the Pacific becomes more marked day by day.

Refusal of the Japs to come out for a major engagement of the main fleets has served to aid the American Navy. Even the best authorities admit there could be no major engagement without losses on both sides.

Thus, under a building schedule that allowed for losses that had not occurred, the Navy has expanded faster than expected. The Japanese, of course, are probably building, too, but experts say they can build, launch and commission combat ships as fast as the United States does.

The Jap high command must know this, but apparently is helping to do anything about it. Meanwhile, the American fleet is stretching for the final, big show-down battle—any place—any time.

BELIEVE IT OR NOT, the Office of Price Administration is in quite so bad with the people as it was some time back. Price Administrator Chester Bowles himself is authority for the "While the public still dislikes rationing," Bowles says, "I'm beginning to ask itself what conditions would be without restriction of any kind. Complaints against rationing are on the down-grade. But mail complaining about prices has gained."

Soldiers Interested In Divorce Statutes

RALEIGH—The Attorney General's office and a letter from a representative of the Red Cross in far off Burma asking about North Carolina divorce laws. A soldier out there wanted to know what steps he would have to take to get released from the wife he married not long before leaving this country.

Hughes Rhodes, assistant Attorney General, said there was nothing unusual in the request. It is almost a daily occurrence for some soldier or some soldier's wife to ask a similar question. Mr. Rhodes sees in the situation a good deal of tragedy. While there is nothing in most of the letters to indicate how long the couples have been

at sea until Commander Edwards told of his first news of the birth of his son. . . A friend of his was on off shore patrol duty. . . The latter in making his circling about . . . passed the Commander's ship . . . they usually sent teasing messages back and forth. . . Coming near port one day he saw the signal light of a ship and found it to be the one commanded by his friend. . . He sent out a message saying, "I would like some news. Have you any? . . . My curiosity is great" . . . and the reply came back. . . "Yes, I know what you want to hear, congratulations papa on a 7 ton son. . . The signalman told me my chest expanded a good 14 inches, the baby was then a month old," said Commander Edwards. . .

"I think the American blue-jackets are the grandest bunch of men in the world. You can't beat them in any country. . . They are doing a swell job," he said in commenting on the American sailor.

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Voice OF THE People

What is the most interesting book you read during 1943?

Rev. H. G. Hammett—"I read 'The Robe' by Lloyd Douglas."

Mrs. Johnny Cuddeback—"Is Your War" by Ernie Pyle. The book I enjoyed reading more than any other."

Mrs. W. L. McCracken—"The Robe" by Lloyd Douglas."

Mrs. William Hannah—"My Russia" by Morris Hindus. It would be my first choice and my second would be 'Under Cover'."

Mrs. Ben Sloan—"I read 'The Robe'."

John Taylor—"I liked 'The Errors' by Tucker best with Autobiography of Mr. Tolson."

Mrs. William Medford—"I read 'So Little Time' by John Galsworthy."

Mrs. J. Clay Madison—"I read 'Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo' by Capt. Ted W. Lawson."

Mrs. Ben Colkitt—"I enjoyed 'Crescent Carnival' by Frank Parkinson Keyes and it would be my first choice in fiction and non-fiction 'Long, Long Ago' collection of articles written by magazines by the late Alexander Woolcott."

married or what caused the divorce for separation, it might reasonably be assumed that most of them "stir-of-the-moment" ceremonies. This may be just one of the sequences of wartime hysteria warnings about being notified before entering the marriage state may be air wasted. Many protestations against making divorce laws it is still easier to get married in North Carolina than to get divorced. The Burma lad had to be there wasn't much help for

Soldier (flattering)—You're prettier every day.
 Girl—Yes, I'm living on a lot of brown bread and water to prove my complexion.

Soldier—And how long can you keep that up?
 Girl—Oh, indefinitely.
 Soldier (quickly)—Then, darling, let's get married.

"Yes, I am a self-made man," boasted the magnate.
 The quiet gentleman in the fiscal collar looked at him reflectively. "Sir," he said, "you're the Lord of a great responsibility."

Buy War Bonds and Stamp