

Wilmington Organist Has Serio-Comic Experience

A zealous soldier stirred by his instructions to be forever on the alert caused William G. Robertson, highly respected Wilmington citizen of long standing, a distressing four hours in Laurinburg last Sunday afternoon, which is not without its comical side but also proves how easy it is to cross the hairline dividing good judgment and fanaticism.

Mr. Robertson, a Scotchman of deep American loyalty, and an organist of rare talent, was returning by bus from Kanuga Lake, where he and Mrs. Robertson were spending their summer making life more enjoyable for various and sundry other good Episcopalians, after a hurried trip to Wilmington to play for Miss Margaret Darst's wedding. Miss Darst being the daughter of Bishop Thomas C. Darst, and the ceremony being performed by the Bishop, beloved throughout the diocese not only for his deep spirituality and great human kindness but for his militant patriotism as well.

From this point it is best to let Mr. Robertson tell of the episode in his own way:

"On Sunday afternoon, while riding the bus to Charlotte, I thought that I could use the time to write some poetry which I would enter in the Annual Poetry Contest at Kanuga Lake Inn, on Tuesday night, the 25th. I had a copy of the Saturday Evening Post, and found in it a page of advertising matter that I had a great deal of white space in. I started writing quatrains in verses wherever I could find space, and finally putting the last verse on the margin of the opposite page. This poem was intended to be semi-humorous—which is about as close as I can ever get.

"Then I turned to a page further back, and started a blank verse poem, intended to be serious, with the projected title 'Would You See God?' I started on all this writing about Lumberton. I finished before we reached Laurinburg where the bus makes a short stop. The bus had been crowded, with a soldier standing in the aisle right at my seat. He had left the bus when we reached Laurinburg.

"After a few minutes wait, a City of Laurinburg policeman came inside the bus, while another, with an M. P. came along the outside of the bus. When the inside man got near me he asked, 'Where is the man who was writing in the magazine?' In some surprise I answered that I had. He then asked to see it, and taking it, went through each and every page, stopping and paying particular attention to my writing, which was rather difficult to read, having been done on a moving bus.

"I told him where he could find that I had written, but he went on through the whole thing, stopping at a cartoon to ask me what these marks were. I told him that that was the signature of the man who had drawn the cartoon, which it was. I then asked the policeman at my elbow, on the outside, if he would mind telling me what it was all about. He hesitated a moment and then said 'You are under suspicion of having made notes or plans of the new airfields between here and Lumberton!'

"I tried to tell him that it was simply poetry, but he said that poetry could cover up a lot of things, which is probably true. The upshot was that they instructed me to get my bag and raincoat and come along with them, which I did without protest. Flanked on either side by the city policeman, any with the M. P. in the offing, I was marched to a police car, and taken to the house of the chief of police. I had meanwhile shown all my identity cards to all of the policemen, and now had to show them to the chief, who had at the first, shaken hands with me to show there was nothing personal in it, I suppose.

"After his questioning he said to the patrolmen: 'You haven't anything to hold this man on.' Nevertheless, while the policemen did take me back to the bus station, they refused to let me have the magazine with the poetry I had so dangerously written in it, and they caught the impression that they were going to have it examined. I presume by the F. B. I. to see

if it were not some form of cryptogram or map—which will take up a lot of the FBI's valuable time for nothing!

"The patrolmen were not discourteous, even if one of them did turn in the car and ask, 'Have you got a gun or a knife on you?' I told him that I did not, and that I had only a pencil 'on me' which seemed to have gotten me into trouble.

"They left me with the air that while I had been released from further questioning I had not been released from suspicion. The feature about the whole thing that was least pleasant came from the somewhat dark looks I got from the crowd around us, who had evidently been informed by the very zealous though perhaps not too intelligent soldier what my offense was supposed to be.

"I was permitted to catch a later bus, was put to some inconvenience, but was afforded no indignity such as a search of the officers was that of men doing their duty.

"I am, of course, glad that they are on the job, but it did seem funny to be suspected of espionage of air fields, when our son is wearing wings in the service of the United States, and when I had been doing no more than writing poetry. I have always known that my poetry is none too good, but I had never expected to write some that would throw me into the 'Held for Questioning' category."

U. S. AIR FORCE REPULSES JAPS

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to the northwestward in a Major Sea battle. That fleet, which includes airplane carriers and warships has been engaged by U. S. forces for two days.

"It is still too early to estimate the outcome of the battle at sea being fought off the Solomon Islands," he Navy's communique reported. At least half a dozen enemy vessels previously had been reported damaged in that battle.

As for the situation at Guadalcanal, they said the American forces "are holding their positions in the face of strong enemy thrust and in each action have inflicted heavy damage on the attacking Japanese forces."

The reference to "strong enemy thrust" was interpreted as covering the over-all scene of the Japanese attempt to move back into the Solomon Islands, key spot in the Pacific which could control approaches to New Zealand and Australia.

High praise came from the Navy for the work of U. S. fighter planes based on Guadalcanal. The communique declared "the performance of our fighting aircraft based on Guadalcanal has been outstanding."

Even warmer words came from a naval spokesman who said that "noteworthy in the battle thus far is the magnificent performance of fighter aircraft based on Guadalcanal."

As previously reported, those fighters shot down 21 Japanese planes in a strong enemy attack on Guadalcanal Sunday. Three American planes were downed.

On Tuesday, the United States fighters went into the air to meet an attack by 16 two-motored bombers escorted by 12 Ziv fighters. They defeated the enemy, shooting down seven bombers and five of the swift zeros. One U. S. plane was shot down.

Of the 13 enemy vessels known to have been damaged severely to date in the Solomons action seven were hit off Guadalcanal. One of these was a transport, which was abandoned. The Navy has reported that at least half a dozen other Jap ships were hit in the sea battle northeast of the Islands. Of the ships damaged in the sea battle, two were aircraft carriers and one a battleship. In addition, the score in the accompanying air battles showed 33 enemy planes have been shot out of the air, while U. S. losses have totalled only four.

MANY GERMANS KILLED BY REDS

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after the special announcement telling of the drive on the Kalinin and western fronts, said:

"In the area northwest of Stalingrad intense battles continue. The enemy has concentrated large forces of tanks and infantry and under cover of his air force is continuously attacking our positions.

"Our troops are repelling enemy attacks as well as launching counterattacks upon the German Fascist troops."

Deep in the Caucasus the Germans were acknowledged to have reached Mozdok, only about 55 miles west of the rich oil city of Grozny. The advance to Mozdok represented a 40-mile Nazi gain from the Prokhladnenski sector to the west, but the Russians said fighting was continuing in the latter area.

Soviet troops still were hanging on the German flanks northwest of Stalingrad inside the Don river loop itself at Kletskaia, but the main Nazi drive had passed that city to cross the Don for a bloody tank and infantry descent on Stalingrad.

The Red army also was battling stoutly southwest of Stalingrad in the Kotelnikovskii sector, where the communique said "Soviet forces are holding the enemy onslaught and wearing down his manpower by repeated counterattacks."

Sixty-two Nazi tanks were reported hit by one Soviet unit in this sector, and a second unit destroyed 13 others and killed 500 Germans in the fighting below Stalingrad.

One rifle detachment fighting in the main struggle northwest of Stalingrad was reported to have destroyed at least 29 German tanks.

In this flat sandy expanse between the Don and the Volga rivers hundreds of German bodies littered the approaches to Stalingrad. The Germans were believed to be only 30 miles from the city, but the communique did not disclose the exact distance. Scores of tanks became funeral pyres for their crews, but the Nazis continued to roll big reserves forward.

The big Soviet counter drive against the Nazi "hedhog" defenses in the Rzhhev, Ghatk, Vyazma triangle west and northwest of Moscow did not come as surprise here. There have been rumors of this great struggle for days here. It was common talk on the streets, but the press had not carried a word about it.

The Germans have held this strongly fortified area throughout the winter despite Russian gains to the north and south of it.

Chuhsien Attacked By Chinese Forces

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Chinese soldiers who reached the southwestern suburbs of Chuhsien by the railway from Kiangshan could see flames in the city, a front-line dispatch to the Central Daily News reported. It added that the first fires set by the Japanese indicated their withdrawal was imminent.

Another Chinese column striking westward across the country from Changshan occupied Chuhsien, about 15 miles west of Chuhsien, Monday and continued its advance toward the city, Chinese reports said.

The Central Daily News in a review of the war apparently inspired by official quarters said the offensive in the Solomons and the Chinese counter-offensive in Chekiang and Kiangsi provinces would force the Japanese to revise plans for their continental advance. Hitherto most Chinese authorities have expected an early Japanese attack on Siberia.

"These two thus far successful operations are two bright spots on the global front," the review said.

The battle of the Solomons was seen as an Allied tactical victory in the sense that large units of the Japanese navy had been forced to come out in the open and risk a frontal fight in accord with Allied plans.

"Since this battle apparently is following the lines anticipated by the Allied command there should be little doubt of the outcome," the review said. "A Japanese defeat in this sector of the global front, following the Coral sea and Midway defeats, may be expected to bring a radical change in Japan's war plans."

The American air raid on Aug. 11 on Yochow, Yangtze river port in Hunan province, killed between 400 and 500 Japanese and caused fires in enemy barracks and warehouses lasting 12 hours, Chinese reports said.

AXIS MOVEMENT NOTED IN EGYPT

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British pilots have repeatedly terrified Messerschmitts in their sweeps. At last the desert has a fighter which is more than a match for the ME-109 at any altitude—as attested by the fact that the Messerschmitts have preferred to run away rather than engage them.

For the first time Messerschmitt pilots have had to look above them as well as below. Up to now their superior step-up for high altitude has almost always given them top positions.

United States Army Air Force planes also are here side by side with British planes on the desert airfields. The newest in the American line is the two-engine bomber.

As one American air group arrived a captain strolled over the desert scrutinizing it carefully. An RAF officer wanting to welcome him and cheer him up, if need be, asked, "Well, how does it look to you?"

"It reminds me of home," replied the American. To the puzzled British he added: "I am from southern California and was a surveyor in the desert."

The enemy has brought parachute troops into Egypt, both German and Italian, and for some weeks they were used as elite infantry. They are reported out of their positions now and the question is whether they will revert to their proper role.

If they do, there may be plenty of excitement around these sandy wastes for everybody. Today's atmosphere is one of calm waiting with undertones of mild tension.

The German air force has not been very active, but perhaps this is because they are holding back until their hour comes.

W. H. Wend Gets Papers For Work With AWS Here

W. H. Wendt of Wilmington received his certificate as district civilian director of the air raid warning service from headquarters of the First Fighter Command of the Army Air Forces.

The certificate was signed by Brig. Gen. J. K. Cannon, commander of the First Fighter Command, and by Major Oscar C. Tigner, regional signal officer.

Mr. Wendt, who was appointed several months ago, supervises civilian workers of the warning service in this area.

WEATHER

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WASHINGTON, Aug. 26.—(AP)—Weather Bureau report of temperature and rainfall for the 24 hours ending 8 p. m., in the principal cotton growing areas and elsewhere:

Section	High	Low	Prec.
Arheville	73	51	0.00
Atlantic City	71	56	0.00
Boston	67	50	0.00
Burlington	74	72	0.00
Chicago	82	55	0.00
Cleveland	81	51	0.00
Detroit	78	54	0.00
El Paso	80	62	0.00
Galveston	90	81	0.00
Kansas City	86	75	1.60
Little Rock	90	68	0.14
Meridian	86	71	0.00
Minneapolis	70	60	0.00
New Orleans	86	73	0.28
Norfolk	74	63	0.00
Portland, Me.	68	41	0.00
St. Louis	83	62	0.00
Tampa	88	62	0.00
Washington	76	53	0.00

women representing all the United Nations, will be delivered at 12:30 p. m. Eastern Standard Time.

"The president," Eary said, will speak through this assembly to the youth of the world everywhere, in United Nations and enemy countries too, if they can be reached, emphasizing the duties, responsibilities and opportunities of youth in the days of war and in the days of the peace that will follow.

Carpenter ants hollow out homes in wood, and build galleries, halls and rooms with the skill of an architect.

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ings, two to metal clad structures, 131 to places other than buildings and 140 false.

In the causes for alarm, the 140 false lead the list followed by 127 due to carelessness, 113 of sparks from chimneys, 54 to grass and trash, 50 to automobiles, 39 to oil stoves, 26 to chimneys burning out, 23 to short circuits, 11 each to sparks from flues and unknown with the numbers ranging from one to five for various other reasons. One call was made to Wrightsville Beach.

Larger pieces of equipment purchased for the department during the year were a new automobile for the chief, a truck and an engine for the fire boat.

A thorough inspection of the waterfront by the fire department in conjunction with the U. S. Coast Guard was reported by Chief Croom. He added that "the business district is under constant inspection by the inspector and the merchants are cooperating splendidly."

A general inspection of the city was conducted last fall by all members of the department. They found quite a few hazards, which have been eliminated since the inspection, and a good many of the buildings that they recommended to be demolished have either been torn down or completely rebuilt, making a safer, cleaner house to live in and, of course, a much better looking city."

Charts have been placed in all stations showing the location of all cisterns and drafting wells that can be used in case of an emergency, the chief reported. He added that a chart had been made showing all fire apparatus and equipment within a radius of fifty miles of Wilmington.

Four members of the department were injured during the year when the automobile, on which they were attempting to extinguish a fire, was struck by another car. All of the men have returned to duty except H. C. Rivenbark. Others injured were C. S. Bullard, E. L. Wells and Walter Casteen.

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