

The Chapel Hill Weekly

LOUIS GRAVES, Editor

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The Age of Military Leaders

Not long after the attack on Pearl Harbor, despatches from Washington said that President Roosevelt had decided there must be more young blood in the high ranks of the Army and the Navy. We do not know to what extent that decision has been carried out in the many shifts that have been made in officer personnel in the last two months. There was no striking preference of youth in the replacement of Admiral Kimmel (60) by Admiral Nimitz (57). General Emons is eight years younger than General Short, his predecessor in command of the land forces in Hawaii.

It is to be borne in mind that youth and age cannot always be measured in years. One man may retain the vigor of youth in both mind and physique, longer than another.

Who are the Army and Navy officers who must be trusted to exercise high command in this time of great danger to the nation? It is a terribly difficult question, and the person who must answer it is the President. Of course he has his advisers, on this as on other questions, but the final word is his. He is the man who is responsible to the American people for making the right selections. In facing this obligation, no doubt he thinks many a time of the disheartening efforts of Lincoln, in the first two years of the Civil War, to find a commander who could do the job at hand.

The most conspicuous recent change in a high command has been the replacement of the American Admiral Hart (64) by the Dutch Admiral Helfrich (34) as chief of the United Nations' naval forces in Asiatic waters.

"Why should an over-age officer have been appointed to this vital post to begin with?" asks the *New York Herald Tribune*, "or why, if there was a younger and more vigorous commander available, in the person of Admiral Helfrich, with a long and intimate knowledge of Far Eastern waters and the precise strategic problems now involved, should the change have only been made after the supremely critical battle of the Netherlands Indies was already half lost?"

Perhaps the most obvious comment on this question is that it is quite in the pattern of after-the-event sideline criticism: To have displaced Admiral Hart by Admiral Helfrich several weeks ago would have required, it seems to us, a degree of foresightedness—clairvoyance, indeed—not reasonably to be expected of any individual or council.

"Over-age" is the word applied to Hart in the foregoing quotation. Yet MacArthur, commanding in the Philippines, is only two years younger than Hart. We doubt if there are many people who could be persuaded that MacArthur is that close to being "over-age."

The statement that the highest military capacity is found in young men may of course be met by the citation of notable cases—such as Von Hindenburg—that constitute evidence to the contrary. But the exceptions are not numerous enough to weaken the generalization. Even Robert E. Lee, whom most of us picture as venerable, was only 54 when the Civil War began—eight years younger than Douglas MacArthur is today. England's greatest general in modern times, the first Duke of Marlborough, was regarded as old for military leadership when he went into the

field as the Allied chieftain against the armies of Louis XIV; yet he was only 54 when he won the victory of Blenheim. Prince Eugene, his partner in that brilliant enterprise, was 53.

Alexander overthrew the Persian Empire at 25 and was dead at 33. Hannibal's military career ended when he was 45. Caesar had conquered Gaul and crossed the Rhine at 45, and had come home and finished Pompey by the time he was 52. Charles Martel defeated the Saracens at 42. Charlemagne was a great conqueror before he was 35. Gustavus Adolphus was 38 when he gained the victory, and died in gaining it, at Luetzen; and the man he defeated on that field, Wallenstein, had reached the zenith of his military career at 49. Napoleon won his blazing triumph at Marengo when he was 31, was crowned Emperor at 35, and was dead before he was 52. Wellington was 46 at Waterloo.

Washington was 49, and Cornwallis was 43, at Yorktown. Arnold (who, though he lives in infamy, deserves the chief credit for the victory at Saratoga) was not yet 37 on that glorious October day in 1777. Mad Anthony Wayne was 34 when he stormed Stony Point and was commander-in-chief of the United States Army at 47. Nathaniel Greene had distinguished himself in many battles and was in command of the Revolutionary forces in the South at 38.

At the outbreak of the Civil War, the 75-year-old Winfield Scott had such great prestige, from a military career which had begun in the War of 1812 and reached a climax in his victories in the Mexican War, that as a matter of course he was placed in command of the Union armies; but after a few months he faded out of the picture, and McClellan became general-in-chief at 35. The ages of other Union leaders at the beginning of the war in 1861 were: Grant, 39; Sherman, 41; Hancock, 37; Halleck, 46; Hooker, 47; Meade, 46; Sheridan, 30; Burnside, 37; and Thomas, 45. The ages of eleven Confederate leaders at the beginning of the war were: Lee, 54; Jackson, 37; Joseph E. Johnston, 54; Albert Sidney Johnston, 58; Longstreet, 49; Hood, 39; Forrest, 40; J. E. B. Stuart, 28; Early, 45; Bragg, 44; and Beauregard, 43.

Pershing was 57 when he became commander of the A. E. F.

Among naval leaders, Hawkins was 56 and Drake was 48 when they fought against the Spanish Armada, and both of them had been distinguished long before that. Nelson was 40 when he won the Battle of the Nile and 47 when he was killed at Trafalgar. John Paul Jones was 32 when his *Bonhomme Richard* beat the *Serapis*, and he was in his 40's when Catherine the Great made him a rear-admiral in the Russian navy. Farragut was 63 in 1864 when he took his ships into Mobile Bay. Dewey was 61 when he destroyed the Spanish fleet at Manila.

Although this record shows that most of the great leaders on land and sea have been young men, and justifies the President's determination to search out and use young blood in the Army and the Navy, it would be a grave mistake to take the record as justification for discarding officers simply because they are approaching or have passed 60. The great leaders whom we have named here were not great because they were young; they were great because they had exceptional natural abilities that came to early development. Imagination and daring in warfare are by no means the exclusive possession of the young. Farragut is the oldest man in our list—and Farragut is famous for having uttered, and acted upon, the words: "Damn the torpedoes! Go ahead!" Dewey is in the over-60 bracket, and we recall reading the statement of

an officer in the Navy that Dewey's entrance into Manila Bay was so risky that he would probably have been court-martialed if he had not happened to win the victory.

MacArthur is at an age when by the regulations he could apply for retirement, yet he is displaying all the vigor and dash that are commonly associated with youth. Here is a thought, too, for those who may be too hasty in demanding young men as commanders: the splendid performance of the commanding general in the Philippines is surely the result not only of his great natural ability but also of his experience—of the mature judgment that has grown out of his long training, his study of military science, and his active participation in war.

A celebrated story about Lincoln and Grant is that, when somebody opposed the appointment of Grant as commander-in-chief because he drank too much, Lincoln, having in mind Grant's recent victories in the West, said he wished he could find out the brand of Grant's whiskey and give an ample supply of it to some of the other Union generals. Roosevelt might be disposed to express the wish that he could inculcate both Army and Navy with MacArthur's brand of old age.

Knight to Lecture in Far West

Edgar W. Knight of the University's department of education has gone to San Francisco to deliver, next Tuesday evening, the annual lecture at the Convocation of Kappa Delta Pi, national honor society in education. The lecture, "Progress and Educational Perspective," is announced for publication on that date by the Macmillan Company. While in San Francisco Mr. Knight will attend sessions of the annual convention of the American Association of School Administrators. Among educators who have held the lectureship which Mr. Knight holds this year have been John Dewey, Thomas H. Briggs, Edward L. Thorndike, Lyon Phelps, the late John Finley, and Stephen Leacock. While in San Francisco Mr. Knight will attend sessions of the annual convention of the American Association of School Administrators.

The Alumni Assembly

The University's annual Alumni Assembly will be held here March 13, it was announced yesterday by W. A. Dees of Goldsboro, president of the Alumni Association. It will be attended by officers and directors of the Association and by representatives of alumni classes and local alumni clubs. The program will include the nomination of new officers, who will be elected by mail balloting by dues-paying members of the Association.

Co-Ed Swimming Tomorrow

The University's co-ed swimming team will meet the William and Mary co-ed team here at 11 o'clock tomorrow (Saturday) morning in the Bowman Gray pool. There will be competition in freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke, relay, medley relay, and diving. The public is invited. Miss Ellen Wimberly is manager of the Carolina team, and Mrs. Andrew McIntosh is the coach.

The Basketball League

The Chapel Hill Alumni defeated the Old Grads, 29 to 11, in a league basketball game yesterday evening in the Tin Can. The leading players were George Jolley for the winners and Tom Bost, Jr., for the losers. Next Tuesday evening the Alumni will play the All-Stars and the Old Grads will play the Ball Hawks, who are leading the league with four wins and one defeat.

Story of Cloth through the Centuries Is Told in Book by Elizabeth Chesley Baity

The story of cloth, by Elizabeth Chesley Baity, was brought out this week by the Viking Press under the title, "Man Is a Weaver." Mrs. Baity has been working on this book seven years; not steadily, however, for within that period she has become the mother of two children and has been subjected to various other interruptions.

When she embarked upon the task she thought of making a start with the spinning wheels of Colonial America. But she soon realized that if she was going to tell the story of cloth she had to go back to ancient times. In her tour through the centuries she was aided generously by archaeologists, historians, and other specialists in the University faculty, and she made extensive researches in the University Library.

"Members of the Library staff have patiently ferried textile books to my little cubicle for years," says Mrs. Baity, "and I am deeply grateful to them."

How the people of Egypt made cloth 6,000 years ago; how the Chinese made silk (for 3,000 years a closely guarded secret); the origin and development of India prints and the batik cottons of Java, and of cottons made by the Indians of Peru; of all sorts of fabrics that have been used by mankind, from princes to paupers, since the dawn of history—all this is told. But "Man Is a Weaver" is no technical treatise. It is a spirited story of the exploration, colonization, invention—of struggle and adventure and achievement. Its basic theme is the making of cloth, but the story is real human stuff.

Boy Scout Awards

The following awards were made at the Boy Scout Court of Honor held last week at the high school:

First Class Award to Bill Browne and Milton Heath, Jr.; Second Class Award to Robert Lee Brooks, Benton Johnson, Owen Marsh, and Frank Pittman; Star Scout Award to Ted Browne; and Merit Badges to Fred Bowman, Bill Cobb, Bob DeLaney, Lee Wiley, and Carl Durham, Jr., and Ted Browne.

Harold Meyer presided over the ceremonies. E. T. Browne presented the Star Scout Award to his son Ted and spoke briefly to the Scouts about the part they may be called on to play in the war.

Projects Suggested by Rotary

The following three suggestions, for help to the community, were made by the Rotary Club's board of directors at the club's meeting Wednesday evening at the Inn. (1) That the club cooperate with the U.S.O. in entertaining soldiers here at the week-ends. (2) That the club recommend to the Rotary District Conference that the district set up an annual scholarship for a South American student to study in a state-supported institution in North Carolina. (3) That the Rotary Clubs provide means for remedying defects found in 10th and 11th grade high school boys during the physical examinations now being given throughout the state. The suggestions will be voted on next month.

A Lecture on the Far East

Paul H. Clyde of Duke University's history department will speak on "The Emergence of the United States as a Colonial Power in the Far East" at 8:15 Sunday evening at the Presbyterian church. This will be the second of a series of lectures by Mr. Clyde on the general topic, "The Far East in This War." Everybody is invited.

Co-Ed Fencing Meet Tomorrow

The University's co-ed fencing team will meet the William and Mary co-ed team at 9 o'clock tomorrow (Saturday) morning in the Woollen gymnasium. Everybody is invited. Miss Catherine Henley is manager of the Carolina team, and Miss Mary McCormick, who is majoring in physical education, is the coach.

Miss Ruth Covington Marries

Miss Ruth Covington of Chapel Hill and Mike Roberts of Philadelphia were married January 17 at Bennettsville, S. C. Both of them are graduates of the University. Mr. Roberts works for the Arthur H. Thomas Company, laboratory equipment firm in Philadelphia.

PIANO FOR SALE

For sale: Wing concert grand piano. \$50. Good condition. Five pedals. Telephone 9521, Mrs. W. D. Hinson.

CHIHUAHUA FOR SALE

For sale: Chihuahua (toy dog) puppie three months old. H. C. Buff, Mgr. of Pender's Store.

APARTMENTS FOR RENT

For rent: Two furnished apartments, within five minutes walking distance of the campus. One with kitchen, one without kitchen. Call 8191 or 6791.

SPENCER CORSETIERE

Spencer Corsetiere: Mrs. J. J. (Pattie C.) Baldwin, 203 Parish Place, Durham, N. C. Telephone J-2241.

BABY CARRIAGE, BED, AND CHAIR

For sale: Baby carriage; baby bed, and high chair. All in good condition. Mrs. D. A. MacPherson. Telephone 4966.

COTTAGE FOR RENT

For rent: Small cottage on Hillsboro Street; formerly occupied by the Wichards. Central heat. Call Elizabeth Branson at 6296 or 7921.

HOUSE FOR RENT

For rent: Six-room house partially furnished. Lights, bath, hot and cold water, electric range. Two acres of garden and orchard. Three miles north Old Hillsboro Road. See John H. Madry.

SHRUBS AT HALF PRICE

There will be a workman at Copeland's Nursery tomorrow (Saturday) to dig shrubs and young trees, which will be sold at half price to customers on the grounds. Come and make your own selections. For further information phone Mrs. Poe, 6736.

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