

Hodges' First Army In Powerful Attack Against Nazi Fleets

Carrier-Based Planes Attack Formosa and Jap Okinawa Island Base

After being driven back more than fifty miles, the American First Army under General Courtney Hodges, has refocused its ranks and with the aid of the British and Ninth Army troops launched a powerful offensive against the northern flank of the Germans. The new drive, designed to cut across the German bulge in Belgium, had advanced nearly four miles and narrowed the enemy corridor to about twelve miles. During the meantime, General George Patton's Army, striking the enemy's southern flank, had successfully turned back several fierce enemy counterattacks and was, according to latest reports, renewing its drive to meet the First Army men. Snow, sleet and ice have slowed down the progress of both drives, but the Americans are believed to have turned the tide and relieved the danger for the present, at least, in that sector along the Western Front.

The action by Hodges' men is encouraging in that it proves the Germans did not destroy the First Army, that despite the lightning enemy drive, the Americans were able to withdraw, regroup their forces and launch what appears to be a major drive, all since last December 16. The drive was made in what were described as "the most appalling conditions ever seen on the Western Front".

Every inch of ground being won by the First Army men, who jumped off Wednesday to squeeze Field Marshal Von Rundstedt's northern flank while his wedge is being pushed from the south by the Third Army, is being won on sheer guts, and not on grand strategy.

The morale of Nazi SS troops, high when Von Rundstedt made his breakthrough into Belgium and Luxembourg, is deteriorating rapidly. American officers reported as the Doughboys and tanks advanced through a snow and sleet storm which turned the fighting in the mountains and forests into a white hell.

South and west of Erezee (Belgium) in the Marche area and at the western tip of the offensive penetration, the Germans are falling back and offering no opposition to Allied troops. Directly south they are making each town and hill a stronghold and exact the maximum price for its capture before falling back. The price to Americans at times has been high—quite high.

Although advances up to nearly four miles have been made on the northern German flank, the main battle has not yet been joined. Action so far has been preliminary to the main event which will come when Von Rundstedt's armored forces decide there can be no more retreating and pick the best ground for a last-ditch stand. It is expected that this stand will be somewhere in a rough semi-circle around Houffalize, a road junction fifteen miles southeast of Erezee.

All present indications are that this battle will be the bloodiest the Western Front yet has seen.

Encouraging about as strong an opposition over on the Eastern Front, the Russians are said to have checked a counterattack by the Germans driving to relieve the pressure on the Nazi garrison in Budapest. However, unconfirmed reports maintain that a big Russian-Polish force is

Place More Than Forty Cases On The County Court Docket

Resuming his work as county court clerk, Paul D. Roberson, appointed to the position only this week will face a large task when he prosecutes a crowded docket in the recorder's court next Monday. Up until now, the docket has been placed on the docket for trial next Monday. The session, the first scheduled since December 17, will handle about the largest docket ever prepared for the court. There is some doubt if Judge J. C. Smith will be able to clear the calendar in a single day, and if he does the court will have to work until midnight near night. It is likely that a few cases will be continued, but one is scheduled to go before the jury and the trial is almost certain to require considerable time.

No sensational cases are on the docket, but the court session will attract an unusually large crowd even if no one attends other than the defendants, witnesses and counsel.

Five defendants, Warren McLawhorn, Jack Stokes, Cecil Hemby, Willie C. and Hubert Corbett, are charged with buying and selling scrap tobacco without license. They are under bonds ranging up to \$500. Twelve alleged drunken drivers are facing the court. Eight persons are scheduled to appear before Judge Smith for assaulting others with deadly weapons. Three are booked on larceny and receiving counts. Three others are charged with operating motor vehicles without drivers' licenses, and one is indicted for allowing an unlicensed operator to drive a motor vehicle. Other alleged offenses include, assaults on females, 2; illegal possession of liquor, 2; non-support, 2; drunk and disorderly, 1; adultery, 1; bastardy, 1.

Detailed Inspection Of School Property Made By Grand Jury

Assessing Present Situation, Property Is In Fairly Good Condition

Following an extensive survey, the Martin County Grand Jury recently filed a detailed report on the condition of school properties. Considering present difficulties, including shortages, the property can be said to be in good condition, as a whole. The report, filed by Foreman V. L. Roberson, follows:

White Schools

Jamesville: Building, water and sewer facilities in good condition. Farm Life: Building and water and sewer facilities in good condition, but repairs to basement floor recommended. Bear Grass: Building, water and sewer facilities in good condition. Everetts: Building in good condition, but additional drinking fountains and window shades for principal's office recommended. Williamston High School: Condition of building fair. Repairs to plastering, light fixtures in Room No. 10, 5 window panes, repairs to porch floors and repairs to gym roof recommended. Water and sewer facilities in fair condition. Williamston Grammar School: Repairs to smoke stack, new spigot in boys' toilet, 5 window panes and repairs to plastering recommended. Condition of building and water and sewer facilities fair.

Robersonville High School: Condition of building and water and sewer facilities good. Repairs to cracked section of furnace recommended.

Robersonville Grammar School: Condition of building, fair. Periodic inspection of cracked brick wall, replace twelve window panes, improvements of acoustics in the auditorium recommended. Water and sewer facilities fair. Recommend that bursted pipes on two drinking fountains and steam gauge and pop-off valve on heating plant be repaired.

Gold Point: Condition of building fair. Repairs to front door frame, replacement of two window panes and painting of walls and ceiling in two rooms recommended. Water and sewer facilities in good condition. Hamilton: Building and water and sewer facilities in good condition. Oak City: Building and water and sewer facilities in good condition. Rubbish should be removed from boiler room to eliminate fire hazard. The grand jury was reliably informed that school buses have been used at this point for purposes other than the transportation of school children.

Hassel: Condition of building fair. Recommend repairs to roof. Water and sewer facilities good.

Colored Schools

Williamston: Condition of building and water and sewer facilities fair. Repairs to urnal in boys' toilet, repairs to radiators in rooms Nos. 9, 14 and 17 recommended. The ventilators in room No. 1 cause leaks and additional drinking fountains recommended.

Robersonville: Condition of building good. Two small leaks in roof need repair. Water and sewer facilities fair. Cinder path from building to toilet recommended.

Gold Point: Condition of building fair. New pipe for one stove, new grates, bowls and pipes for two stoves recommended along with a pump valve, water and sewer facilities fair.

White Oak Springs: Condition of building fair. Two leaks in roof should be repaired. Water and sewer facilities good.

Poplar Point: Building and water and sewer facilities in fair condition. Hamilton: Condition of building and water and sewer facilities fair. One stove and two grates and repairs to pump recommended.

Oak City: Condition of building is good. One leak in roof should be repaired. Water and sewer facilities fair. Pump pitcher needed.

Salsbury: Condition of building and water facilities good. Front steps need repairs.

Whichard-James: Condition of building good. Water and sewer facilities fair. No drinking water on premises.

Jones: Building and water and sewer facilities in good condition. Bowers: Condition of building is bad. Structure is old and in very bad condition and location poor. New building on better site recommended. Water and sewer facilities bad.

Dardens: Condition of building is bad. Removal of partition, addition of new rooms, repairs to underpinning.

Limited Meat Supply Is Being Packed in County This Season

Many Martin County farmers are packing away their meat supply for the next twelve months. The hog-killing season is being reported in unusually large numbers, and in several sections all other activities have been pushed aside to make way for the annual task. "We have hardly had time to feed and water our stock at home since the hog-killing season opened in a big way a few days ago," several farmers said, explaining that they had not missed the first one in their communities so far. Possibly in no other undertaking is the cooperative effort further advanced than in killing hogs and packing meat.

Preliminary reports declare that the county will eat and pack a limited supply of meat this year. In most cases the supply is hardly more than sufficient to care for home needs, meaning that country hams will be a scarce item on those tables where the houses depend on delivery from the surrounding community. A report from Griffins Township this week stated that the supply while not as large as usual there, is possibly large enough to extend to other tables.

Cholera or some other disease has swept herds in several parts of the county, centering mainly in Jamesville and Bear Grass Townships. Some say the disease is cholera, but in years past it seldom struck with such force. Some farmers are of the opinion that fever is causing their hogs to die in numbers. One farmer in Jamesville Township was said to have lost hogs valued at \$1,500, and herds in other areas have been all but wiped out in recent weeks.

After raising hogs on a comparatively large scale in recent years, it is fairly apparent that many Martin County farmers are planning to limit their production to home needs.

Thirtieth Division Adds To Its Great Record in Germany

Activities of "Old Hickory" Division Reviewed by Young County Man

(The Thirtieth Division, including quite a few Martin County boys, figured prominently in the great fight on the Western Front since the account below was written. The "Old Hickory" boys helped stop Von Rundstedt's drive.—Ed.)

Another entry in the bright record of the Old Hickory Division was recently reported by Pfc. Paul VanLandingham, Martin County young man. The Division includes quite a number of North Carolinians and several from this county. Writing from Germany under date of December 2, 1944, Pfc. VanLandingham said:

"For some time I have been hoping I could tell you back home about this outfit of ours and the swell record it has made in World War II from the time it hit the Normandy beach and began fighting on June 15. Censorship has kept our Old Hickory Division's engagements pretty much 'under wraps' but we have made a record we'll stack up against any other division's and the Public Relations staff has made it easier for us to get the information back to you by summarizing the highlights of the 30th's great campaigns and getting this material cleared through the press censorship.

"This is some of the information we can tell:

"When the 30th Infantry Division troops charged through the greatest concentration of artillery and mortar fire they had met in the Western Campaign to storm the bunkers of the German Siegfried Line and establish a bridgehead in the Fatherland, they reached an objective for which, in three months of bitter fighting, they had been paying the way since the battle near the beach.

"Smashing the Siegfried Line, the sector north of Aachen where it was heavily manned and then aiding in closing the gap that forced Aachen's fall constituted one of the toughest jobs assigned any division in the Battle of Europe.

"But the 30th Infantry Division received its baptism of fire on a tough assignment June 15 and its progress to the German frontier was marked by battles that have been vital in the master strategy of World War II.

"The all-important breakthrough south of pulverized St. Lo on July 25, a date already historically significant, was spearheaded by the Old Hickory men. A real fighting team, the troops of the 30th had qualified for that assignment which battered open a passage through the hedgerow country allowing American armor to fan out over France—a series of successful offensives against the Germans. At the outset the 30th drove the Germans across the Vire River. Then in a spectacular dawn attack the Old Hickorymen forced a crossing of the Vire River and opened the drive on St. Lo.

"These battles in the hedgerow sector were real slugging matches, every foot of advance being skillfully and stubbornly contested and they were complicated by rough and frequent counterattacks.

"However, some of the heaviest fighting remained to be accomplished by the 30th after it had given the 'green light' to the armored drive.

"That occurred in the Mortain-St. Barthelemy sector when the 30th took over the area of the First Division at a time when four German panzer divisions struck in the most powerful blitz effort of the campaign, to drive through to Avranches and separate the American First and Third Armies.

"It was there that infantry riflemen with bazookas, artillery and tank destroyers, tanks, engineers, AAA units, cooks and messengers, with the help of U. S. planes and RAF rocket-firing Typhoons finally threw back the German tanks in a battle that saw-sawed for three days before the Germans concluded that they were no match for one American division.

TAX LISTING

Tax listing, getting underway in several of the county townships the early part of this week, is progressing unusually rapidly in most of them, Tax Supervisor M. L. Peel said yesterday. While the work has not been in a rush, several of the list-takers have been quite busy.

The listing work is to be completed by January 31, and last-minute listing is certain to run into long waits and delays. No extension of time has been allowed and it is likely that no extra days will be allowed this year for listing properties and polls for taxation.

Three Of Five Men Called for Service Accepted Recently

Seven Colored Men Called to Report for Pre-Induction In County Thursday

Three of the five Martin County white men called for pre-induction last month were accepted, according to an official audit just returned to the draft board. At least one of the group had made a previous trip to the service center. He is one of the few men in this county to have had his classification changed from 4-F to 1-A and to find his way into the service.

The names of those accepted last December 19 are, Luther William James for limited service, William Alfred Roberson and Anphus Llewellyn Knox. William Hux and Dennis Mobley made the trip to the center but were apparently rejected.

On Thursday of this week, seven colored men were called for pre-induction. Their names, registration and last-known addresses: Randolph Hudge Ormond, Williamston. Heber Lanier, RFD 1, Oak City. James Henry Mayo, Hassell and RFD 1, Oak City. Clifton Edward Daniel, Jamesville and Norfolk. James Henry Roberson, Williamston and Washington, D. C. Alonza Teel, Robersonville. Garland Moore, RFD 1, Williams-ton and Lansing, Mich.

Daniel was transferred to Norfolk and did not leave with the contingent reporting from this county.

Only two of the seven men called were farmers, and only one of them was married. As far as it could be learned none of the group was below 25 years of age. Two were 28 years old.

A few colored men are to answer a final induction call next Tuesday, and less than a dozen white men are to answer a final induction call about the middle of this month. A fair-sized group of white men will be called for pre-induction examinations the latter part of this month.

No instructions relative to drafting all 4-F's have been received by the draft board in this county, but

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Admits Another In Series of Robberies

Faced with further incriminating evidence, Henry "Pinky" Bonds, 25-year-old colored man arrested here week before last for the robbery of the local laundry, Harrison Oil Company offices and Chas. H. Jenkins, last Wednesday admitted another in a series of robberies reported in the county during recent weeks. The fourth in the series of robberies was admitted only after officers had gathered evidence virtually connecting Bonds with the alleged crime.

While he maintains that Harry Land crawled through a window, Bonds admits he was present when the filling station of Lucian Peel was robbed in Bear Grass Township on December 14. Bonds denies he was present when Brown's service station was robbed in Bear Grass the same night. Three cars were stolen in the county that night and the following morning, and it is believed that Bonds was a party to the thefts.

Firemen Called To Oil Transport Truck Thursday

Local volunteer firemen were called to a burning oil transport truck about six miles out on the Windsor Highway yesterday afternoon at 3 o'clock. Owned by the B. and T. Transit Company of Smithfield, the truck caught fire when the brakes ran hot and locked on the rear wheels. It was thought for a short time that the fire would spread to the oil cargo, but the driver, using an extinguisher, brought it under control before much damage was done.

Cites Need For Big Polio Fund in the County This Season

Martin Citizens Are Asked To Raise Approximately \$2,000 For the Fund

Pointing out that the 1944 epidemic of infantile paralysis was the second worst outbreak of the disease in its history in the United States, L. Bruce Wynne, chairman of the 1945 polio campaign in this county, issued a statement today in which he emphasized the "need to reinforce our lines of defense against this insidious enemy of childhood."

The annual fund appeal is being conducted this year from January 14-31 in celebration of the President's birthday, and, as in the past, most of the funds will be used to combat polio in this State.

Although North Carolina had one of its worse epidemics of infantile paralysis during the past year, the death rate from the dread disease was the lowest ever recorded, solely because the funds to provide the best possible medical aid and equipment were immediately available, Chairman Wynne pointed out.

"This record proves again that quick hospitalization of victims is imperative and the campaign this year will be pointed towards funds to support adequate hospital facilities to serve the growing number of persons stricken each year, the chairman said.

"Since no one knows where, or how hard, polio may strike in 1945, we must again be ready to meet the attack wherever it may come," Chairman Wynne said.

Through November 21 of this past year, 848 cases of infantile paralysis had been reported to the State Board of Health since before the epidemic last summer. Of this number 618 patients have received treatment at the Hickory Polio Emergency Hospital, the Gastonia Orthopaedic Hospital and the Charlotte Memorial Hospital. Four hundred and thirty-five were treated at Hickory.

Only 13 deaths were reported at these three hospitals, making the lowest death rate ever recorded for an infantile paralysis epidemic.

Eighty-three per cent of the hospitalized cases reported will return to normal or near-normal health, as

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Christmas Gifts Are Distributed by Lions

The local Lions Club carried out its annual Christmas Cheer program in the county during the recent holiday season. Approximately forty-five homes were gladdened by the project, which was handled and paid for by the club.

During the evening of Christmas Eve, members of the club assembled and made up the gifts, which were large bags containing fruits, nuts, groceries and other items. On Christmas morning the Lions distributed these bags to indigent blind, crippled, needy and aged persons or families living in this and other communities in the county.

Members of the club who helped with the distribution of these gifts report that it was quite an inspiration, to witness the apparent appreciation of the recipients.

Fire Destroys Tenant House on Farm Near Here

Believed to have started from a heater, fire destroyed the small five-room tenant house on D. M. Roberson's farm, about two miles from here on the Everetts Road at 1:30 o'clock Tuesday afternoon. No one was at home and when the fire was discovered it had gained so much headway that neighbors and others rushing there were only able to save the contents from the rear part of the house.

Local firemen were called and they responded but nothing could be done to save the house.

LAND PRICES

Land prices are believed to have reached an all-time high peak in this county this week when the Anderson-Pippen farm, about two miles west of here on Highway 64 sold for \$26,500. The Strawbridge farm on the old Williamston-Everetts Road, sold for \$9,000, observers expressing the opinion that this sale was possibly higher than the other one. Roy Bowers bought the first farm and it was rumored the bid might be raised. The second farm was sold to Albert Perry. The price averaged well over \$140 an acre, including woodsland.

Prices were equally as high for the personal property sold at auction Wednesday.

Gradual Decline In Number Weddings Reported in County

Marriages Drop from 226 before the War to 190 Last Year in This County

Even though there has been a gradual decline in the number of marriage licenses issued in this county in each succeeding year following the outbreak of war in December, 1941, Cupid has struggled to keep up the work. And, considering the obstacles, a bang-up job has been accomplished. It is indeed apparent that his field of operations has been materially limited by the withdrawal of eligibles for the war, but in some months last year when it looked as if not a single license would be issued in the county, a match would be consummated by drawing in a returned serviceman or one home on leave. Marriages among older couples have possibly been more popular during the past year or two than before.

In the year 1941, 226 licenses were issued by the marriage bureau in this county. The decline was gradual in the following two years, and last year the number dropped to 190, or thirteen below the total for 1943.

Last month there were 23 licenses issued in the county, eight to white and fifteen to colored couples. Prior to the war as many as 63 licenses were issued in December in this county.

Licenses were issued to the following last month:

White
Dowell Guy Forbes and Magnolia Edmondson, both of Robersonville.
William Melton Ayers and Christine Ayers, both of Robersonville.
Dr. R. G. Hicks and Ethel Eliza—

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County Boy Earns Coveted Air Award

Previously cited for distinguished service, S/Sgt. Lathan N. Leggett, young Martin County man and son of Mr. and Mrs. Henry W. Leggett, Sr., of Robersonville, was recently awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross. The award, about the second or third made to a Martin County man, was given "For extraordinary achievement on many bombardment missions over enemy occupied continental Europe."

The citation further reads, "Sgt. Leggett's actions reflect the highest credit upon himself and the armed forces of the United States."

The young man, at the time the award was made, had flown thirty combat missions, participating in attacks on Hamm, Adheim, Saarbrücken, Kiel, Stuttgart, Hamburg, Bremen, Brunswick, Munich, and military installations in support of the Allied ground forces.

Sgt. Leggett has been in the service almost two years. He received his wings at Harlingen, Texas, and completed his combat training at Biggs Field, Texas.

Small Child Dies At Parents' Home

James Marvin Coburn, 15-months-old son of Mr. Marvin Coburn and wife, Mrs. Minnie Lee Wheeler Coburn, died at the home of his parents here on Pine Street Wednesday afternoon at 4 o'clock following an illness of only a few hours. Apparently in his usual health, and he had not been sick a day in his life, the little fellow played until bed time Tuesday night. Early the next morning he woke up with a high fever, and double pneumonia developed, resulting in death that afternoon.

Besides his parents, he is survived by a sister, Amie.

Funeral services were conducted at the home yesterday afternoon at 3 o'clock by Rev. H. M. Pope, interment following in the Whitley Cemetery near the Whitaker farm about five miles from Williamston.

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Survives Sinking In Sweet Water Creek

Mr. Bill Keel, great hunter and fisherman, barely escaped with his life a short time ago when his cypress canoe went down with him in Sweet Water Creek just below the bridge on Highway 64. Dumped into the icy water, Mr. Keel, attired in winter clothing and boots, said he swam about fifteen feet and caught hold of a log. He steered the log toward shore and made his way to land, cranked up his old Model A Ford and drove to town in a hurry.

"I came very near going down once or twice, but when my head would bob up I would blow a regular water spout and paddle that much harder," he said. Even though there was ice on the water, Mr. Keel declared that the sinking and struggle seemed a bit funny at the time.

"I was so busy turning and twisting, blowing water and paddling for shore that my antics actually amused me at the time," he said. "I did not get cold until I got to my car, parked a short distance away, and then I drove the fastest I ever did."

Mr. Keel, about 70 years of age, said he suffered a bit from shock, but he did not even take cold.

Mr. Keel had placed his gun beside him and the weapon accidentally fired, blowing a fairly sizable hole in the bottom of the boat. The water gushed in and the boat started settling rapidly and before he could paddle ashore. He later recovered his gun and several other articles he had with him in the boat.

Funeral For County Man's Brother Held

Funeral services were conducted at the home in Pender County last Saturday for William M. Eubanks, brother of John W. Eubanks of Hassell. Interment, following the last rites conducted by Rev. J. Carroll, was in the Scotts Hill Cemetery, Pender County.

A son of the late John H. and Nell Whitehead Eubanks, he was born in Pitt County 66 years ago, but had made his home in Pender County for many years where he was prominently connected with the oil business and where he served as a member of the county board of education. He was a steward of the Methodist Church.

Surviving are his wife, the former Josephine Hewitt; four daughters, Mrs. Lemuel R. Harris, of Warren-ton; Mrs. James Ivie, of Leaskville; Mrs. Milton A. Smith, of Swan Quarter; Mrs. George B. Randall, of Baltimore; one son, William M. Eubanks, Jr., of Wilmington; a sister, Mrs. W. R. Bowers, of Bethel; three brothers, John W. Eubanks, of Hassell, Melvin Eubanks, of Wilmington and Gurtie Eubanks, of Richmond.