The North Carolina Shipbuilder

Published by the North Carolina Shipbuilding Company, Wilmington, North Carolina, in the interest of its employees.

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Vol. 1, Feb. 1, 1943 No.

THINK OF THESE MARINES

By HERBERT CLYDE LEWIS

(Crossed from This Week)

I was drinking a Daquiri and debating with my wife over whether we should go out for a cold drink, but I didn’t mind dining alone at Joe’s.

I had become one of Joe’s constant customers. It was a pleasure merely to roll one of his Daquiris around your tongue, or to see one of his famous steak stumps.

Yes, it was a pleasure—until I saw that picture.

I am a sometime reader of the magazine and looked at the picture. It showed six American Marines in a day-lot concentration camp in Shanghai.

One was an American, but most of them are not 30 years old, in fact, many are colored. These men were in the navy, as were the boards and mustaches.

"Smile, Look happy!"—one almost can hear the photographer urging the commands.

And this was their picture. I was back proudly, defiantly.

One Marine turned to me and seemed to be staring at me with eyes sardonic, as though to say, "What do you do, my boy, with my glass and drained my drink.

Look, I’m long on you."

There must be millions like me in every city, every town, every village, the whole of the two fatherland kids. I’ve got a great job in a field that’s probably vital to the winning of this war, but I don’t see any decent salary and live fairly well.

After Pearl Harbor, like most other things in life, it seems to be a war on the home front. I’ve been a blood donor, joined the air-raid wardens, gone after my taxes, and paid my taxes.

My wife and I did all that, and more, pretty thoroughly.

At least, we did for a while. But the War has long left the home front.

Now it’s being dragged, by something happened to me, something that might be called patriotic dry rot. Slowly I begin to lose my grip as a home-front fighter. Slowly I begin to realize I care beyond all reason in expensive food and other luxuries and a desperate sort of business.

I still can’t explain it fully. Partly I believe it’s the reverse of the sense of any real feeling of accomplishment, of consequence.

At any rate, the War began to seem remote—"something that happened in February," I guess up my civilian defenses and let them fall. For bees in the form of purchases lagged. I invested a lot about "Washington ineffi- cient," "We’re not so clever in the field," and once, to my utter disgrace, I bought a gas mask that I wasn’t entitled to.

On one occasion, Joe was at Joe’s, with those bearded American men, to listen to their stories.

Suddenly I realized with an odd truth that I couldn’t have any of them in the eye. I tried to look, but I must have failed.

Henry, the waiter, came over to me and said, "Joe wants to see you."

I suppose you’d call this a social dinner. I walked out of Joe’s, after paying for my drinks.

AS OTHERS SEE US

The following editorial appeared in the Charlotte Observer January 30, 1943:

All North Carolina citizens have reason to take pride in the splendid seaport of Wilmington in the matter of building ships or, in the war, to transport equipment, food and other supplies to our armed forces abroad, and to our allies.

Launchings of new freight ships of 9,500 to 10,000 tons at the rate of two a week or better have been so commonplace at the Wilmington plant of the North Carolina Shipbuilding Company that the individual vessels don’t get the front-page news value and attracts little general attention.

But the importance of what has been done by the North Carolina Shipbuilding Company can be appreciated when one considers the essential facts that 30 or 40 vessels have been launched at Wilmington, that they are now being turned out at the rate of about one every three days, that the speed is expected to accelerate to two or three a day on the East or Gulf coast.

Such production is being turned up, that about 15,000 people are employed at good wages, and many or most of them are working full time.

It is of peculiar interest to the people of the State that the great Wilmington enterprise is headed by a North Carolina man.

The North Carolina Shipbuilding Company is a subsidiary of the New York Shipbuilding Corporation and the shipyard chairman is Homer L. Ferguson, a Wilmington native, and his brother, N. C., a member of the distinguished family of Hanover County, of which Hon. Gar- th Ferguson, U.S. Senator and Frank E. Ferguson of the Central Trade Commission is a member.

Editor’s note: We have called the Charlotte Observer’s attention to the fact that this is a bit conservative as to the number of vessels that have been launched.

The correct number of course being far higher.

Don’t Risk Danger

For a foreman today to expose his workers needlessly to the risk of injury is just as unprofessional as it would be for a pilot to land the field needlessly to expose his men to the fire of an enemy machine gun.

As a member of the Board of Directors, Lieut. Colonel L. P. Ware, yesterday submitted the following resolution:

"For a foreman today to fail to take common sense measures to protect himself and his colleagues from the use of injury may be as disastrous as the failure of a soldier in the field to take elementary precautions against an enemy bombeder attack.

"All out war has made soldiers of us all.

"I, therefore, briefly, am the compulsory reason for emphasizing on safety work today."

Co-Operation Speeds Work Of Rationing For Employees

Fine cooperation between our yard and the new Rationing Board has resulted in speeding the issuance of ration books to employees.

Members of the county board have been most helpful, making all decisions, and the shipyard staff of the board has worked with one end in view—to serve the interests of conservation and at the same time to prevent rationing lag.

It was decided last July to set up a staff of competent men in order that the employees would not have to lose valuable time in obtaining the necessary permits from the board in Wilmington, and, guided and assisted by the board, especially by E. L. White and Elinne Water.

At least, the rationing was expedited.

I saw a glance of "A" gasoline cards.

Then came the "C" supplementary cards where justified. Later, there were added fuel oil, tires, bicycles, etc.

Mr. White and Mr. Marks spend considerable time in efforts in the yard’s administra- tion of sending, superseding charts work done by the yard’s rationing representatives.

As a result of their work, the help the proper distribution of rationed articles has been greatly expedited.

Some extent of the work done may be seen from the following list:

Total issuance since July 9, 1942, to Feb. 1, 1943 25,361

The Board’s latest breakdown of the figures is as follows:

Gasoline ration books issued 15,364

Tire certificates issued 4,428

Fuel coupons issued 2,188

Deduction of course, is, no expense for the county attached to this, which was organized solely to save time, so that men would not lose time work by having to go to Wilmington and help swell the crowds already there.

The permanent rationing commit- tee is composed of P. F. Flan- er, chairman; Aldrich Barbour, "A. E. Maclay, with O. M. Rich- ardson, and Harry E. Payne is chief clerk of the Rationing Office.

STEEl And SHIPS

Each Liberty ship requires tons of steel, 3,725 tons of plates and 700 tons of this steel, will take 1,400 to 1,700 pounds of steel. All the larger C-type vessels use more steel, approximately 600 to 1,800 additional tons, depending upon the type.

This is interior view of the rationing office at our yard. The staff works under decisions made by members of the County rationing board. Shown at the window at left are Mrs. Frank O’Brian, Vice President of the board, and Mrs. F. H. BLEVINS, our Secretary.

"Mr. F. F. Ware," he said, "Secretary."

"I wish to get into the record correction of an inaccuracy which is well meant, the statement is that numerous improvements were made in the plant, in closing completion of the new yard.

"The Fabricating Shops which were a part of the North Yard are nowhere near completion, and we have felt practically no benefit from these shops, rather, so far, a hindrance because of the division of the ship’s powers, which hindrance will be continuing for some months, until the moving of the machines is completed.

"I wish to add, briefly, are the compo- sitional feelings of the emphasis on safety work today."

Collective responsibility and the use of every available pro- gram, especially of the shipping of ship parts is a patrio- tic duty—From Our Yard.

Buy War Bonds—Ten per cent every yard.

CORRECTION

The following letter has been received relative to the leading article in the January 1 issue of "North Carolina Shipbuilder":

"Mr. E. F. Ware,

Secretary."

"We are glad to publish this letter of correction and to know that our model is so carefully by the Hulji Superintendent."

NOTE: We are glad to publish this letter of correction and to know that our model is so carefully by the Hulji Superintendent.

"J. A. Maclay,

Chief Superintendent.

Buy War Bonds—Ten per cent every yard.

Who is he? Maybe he is you. If you recognize this drawing as yourself, come to the editor’s office in the Administrative building and if you are the subject of the drawing you will be presented the original drawing.

February 1, 1943