



The sojourner. Volume II, Number II February 1943

Civic Understudies (Group : Two Rivers, Wis.)
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"THE SOJOURNER"

VOLUME II, NUMBER II

HI THERE, FELLOWS!

We've had snow here in Two Rivers.
Lots of it!
So much that the city truckers
have been kept busy day
and night
hauling it away,
and the neighbors have asked if they might
throw some over the fence into the yard
next door
because there was no room for any more
where they'd been shoveling out the
driveway.

Yes,
I'll bet
when they have the Snow Festival next
summer, this is the snow they'll use
to get
all wet with
and impress
the country with news
of "The Coolest Spot in Wisconsin."

But, Fellows --
If only you could have been here that
Monday night!
It was like a dream.
Houses, trees and streets --
the very sky was white
with swirling particles that seemed
like sharp sand of a desert place,
or the stinging spray loosed in your face
as a boat surges into the wave.

But you'd know more about that.
You, who already know
about snow.

Had you been here that night, you'd
have noticed the little things, too, --
like a chin-deep, Christmas-Card house
you knew
was warm inside.
And you might have tried
to imagine why you were astonished
at the beauty of a young elm tree --
A fan-shaped silhouette against
a curtained street light.

Funny, the next day, though,
how easy it was to forget the night
as you floundered along waist-deep
until you'd reached the street

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where the snow ploughs had been.

It was fun!
For the snow that had fallen
had drifted so high
that the sheen on the surface
was up to your eyes
in some places.

And the giant balls in front of the
Post Office
were buried bushes whose great
tops were cracked where the branches
had bent under the weight;
yet how much like Hugh Schaum
Tortes they looked -- only finer --
the kind that "Mom"
makes or that you ask for after
a chicken dinner
at Hessel's.

Your sisters and brothers
on their way to high school
were colorfully dressed.
Plaid caps, supported by a pair of
red ears seemed a rule
for the boys, while the best
part of the girls were heavily
scarved and booted --
They looked like they'd looted
the wardrobe of the
Russian Ballet!

Yes, this is the way it was.

Washington Street?
Well, it was Two Rivers' "Great White Way",
drifted and smooth at night
until the snow ploughs came along
and piled in head-high cones next day.

The gas stations looked all wrong
and very funny. In spite of the fact
that they don't make much money
now that gas is rationed,
each station
had packed around it
several miniature mountains when the
snow was cleared away,
and each attendant sat in his own
particular "Shangri-La"
throughout each day --
awaiting the inevitable few you meet
who always dare to be the first
to take a car out on the street.

(Continued on page four)

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The Civic Understudies

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* * * * *

BITS FROM THE BARRACKS

Dear Friends:

....Could be you'd like a little bit of back history concerning myself. I was inducted on January 26, 1942, at Fort Sheridan, Ill. Was sent to Sheppard Field at Wichita Falls, Texas where I underwent many different kinds of examinations, both mental and physical. From there I was sent to New Orleans where I attended an airplane mechanic school for 4½ months. Completing that course, I was sent out to the Douglas Aircraft Plant in Santa Monica, Calif. for a specialist course in mechanics. (Also visited Beverly Hills and Hollywood often.) From California I was sent to Key Field in Meridan, Miss. There I was attached to the 88th bombing group. A week later I was transferred once more (only 2½ blocks) to the squadron I am in now. I was only in this squadron a couple of days when we were sent out on maneuvers in Tennessee. Very late in November we were sent down to Hattiesburg, Miss. for a couple weeks and from hence we got down here to Avon Park, Florida.

This place certainly suits me fine even with snakes, alligators, and what not....

Sincerely,

Pfc. Mathias E. Koch
Avon Park, Florida

Dear Editor,

....It seems good to hear how the boys from Two Rivers are doing and enjoying themselves. I think your paper, "The Sojourner", is a grand little paper.

Sincerely,

Pvt. Earl L. Spaeth
Los Angeles, Calif.

Dear Friends,

....I'm not in Alameda any more. Sure wish I was. I'm somewhere in India. The exact place I can't say. Wish I could tell you what kind of a country this is and what kind of work I'm doing. There are some white girls over here, but I still prefer those from the States any time.

It took us to get here. And of course I had to get sea sick. One of my pals asked me if I was weak. I said, "No, I was throwing it just as far as the rest." Well, I guess that's about all I can write for this time.

Yours truly

Pvt. Ray Boness

News from Camp Livingston, La.

Let me have a few words to say.

I am a dining room orderly, and they call me "Champ". How is Horseshoe Elliott coming along? As for me, I'm keeping myself in good shape by ringing the pegs.

Pvt. Lawrence Pellerin
Camp Livingston, La.

Dear Staff:

....Not much to say outside of the general run of information. At present we're at a new camp. It is quite nice but muddy. For excitement the boys go to movies, dances, play cards, eat and sleep. The people here are very friendly and much interested in the U.S. They all think it is a fairyland. In a way it is, but you have to make it that way or it can be h---(censored). So long and the best of everything.

Your pal

Pfc. Leon "Smoky" Smongeski
c/o Postmaster, New York

Dear Friends,

....We have a very good deal here at this new hospital. There are long hours, but it's a good feeling to help people out. I didn't think I'd enjoy it at first but one can make up his mind to do anything. I work in Sick Officers Quarters and have really made contacts with some swell men.....

Sincerely

Bill Steinbrecher, HA2/c
U. S. Naval Hospital
Seattle, Washington

Sojourner Staff:

Just received your paper in tonite's mail and I thought I'd drop you a line in appreciation.

I've just finished packing for a 3-day regimental problem; we're leaving here tonite at 11:20 P.M. Our destination (as far as I know) is Cottonton which is a little burg smaller than Mishicot--thinking of it I wouldn't be too much surprised if it's the size of Tisch Mills. After a 3-day problem, we usually come back thru there--the last two times we bought out their two general stores.

We won't be in until Saturday morning, and, believe it or not, I'll be freezing all that time. It's only 10 above today, but it feels about the same as 10 below at home. What affects me so much is that it's so damp here.

I've just finished reading the list of recent inductions--quite a few young fellows--well, I hereby extend an invitation to them to join the paratroops if they're looking for action. They'll get plenty of it before they ever see foreign service. Besides there's always that \$100 per month we get.

Joe Lachowicz just received his wings about 2 weeks ago and is now in Camouflage School at the Parachute Replacement Center.

There are also two swell fellows here from Manitowoc. They are in the Regimental Bank. Their names are Harry Sykora and Cy Mittnacht.

Fellows here gripe plenty but there are very few who would go back to their old units. Their biggest pœve is, or rather I should say are, the Marine Soldiers. I might sound as if I'm patting myself on the back, but we're as good a unit as any in the Army, Navy, Marines or Air Corps. I can hear you say, "What about the Paramarines?" Well, the fellows here even consider themselves above that unit. Of course, this still has to be proven.

Well, I'll close by saying thanks for the paper and keep up your good work.

Sincerely,
Pvt. Orville Martin
Co. "G" 505th Pcht. Reg.
Fort Benning, Ga.

Dear Friends,

It was just about a year ago that you back home, Floyd Bauknecht, Paul Neveau, and I used to get into arguments over this same paper which I am always so happy to

receive. I wish it were a daily. I can still see everyone wanting to throw chairs at me when I got too radical.

Since that time, though, a great change has come over us. Our country is at war and we are scattered all over the world. There will be much to talk about when we get our feet under our own tables again. That is, if you haven't burned them up to keep warm.

Floyd's article on England was very interesting and can bet that if he says it, that is the way it is.

I, for one, want to take my hat off to Miss Rose Castagna. She should sure enough be proud of her work. She has no picnic planning for hundreds of soldiers. The USO is a wonderful thing and means a lot, but if this work doesn't take all of Rose's energy (and she has plenty) nothing will. Best of luck, Miss Castagna.

I, myself, am somewhere in Alaska. This is the country where they are supposed to have eskimos, where they had a gold rush and where the Japs had funny ideas in their heads. The foolish fellows!

Terry Lesperance, Harold Pries and John Clusen should make good officers as they certainly are right fellows.

If anyone back home can top this one, let them try it. I lost my fork so I had to eat Christmas dinner with a spoon. Just try eating turkey, spreading butter, stirring your coffee and eating mince meat pie with a spoon. It's really fun, yeh.

I spent Christmas Eve listening (and helping) to several fellows argue as to why we would have a better country if the south would have won the Civil War. Yes, some were southerners, but you can bet your boot laces as to which side I took.

Until we meet again, so long and good luck!

Sincerely
"Bud" Otis

HELP WANTED: MALE!

Yes, we need your help. We realize of course, how difficult it is for you to find time to write all your friends and keep your family informed as to your health and whereabouts, but unless more of you boys write us letters, we'll have to cut the size of this humble paper to one sheet. If every other one of you will write us just one letter every six months, we'll keep on sending this paper until the lights go on again.

Feb 43

The following letter from Edwin Boettger was received by the Senior Catholic Youth Organization of St. Luke's Parish and proved so interesting they consented to our request that we might pass it along to you.

.... During the past eight months I have been fortunate to be in the center of things, here in New York, by reason of the strategic location of the school I attended, and the new one at which I am now stationed. Some things that I regarded as stupendous some time ago have since been dwarfed by other experiences.

.... Just now the things I would like to talk about are taboo, but I can talk about the U. S. Maritime Service, which is the Service that I am in.

First of all, the Maritime Merchant Marine is now an armed service. The term armed service of course is applied only to our forces that engage in offensive strategy and whose reason for existence is truly a task of offensive warfare. It is true that the Merchant ships are heavily armed and will give battle when attacked. But that is defensive warfare according to the strict interpretation of the word. The task of the Merchant Marine is to carry troops and supplies, or as the newly coined phrase has it, "To pass the ammunition".

We don't have the Franking Privilege, which means "free mail", and are not entitled to veteran's status after the war ends. At no time are we bound by an enlistment period and so can leave the Service at any time. In fact, the reverse is true. With the merit system in use, it is a question of trying to qualify and stay in rather than trying to get out.

All through the Engineering Course aboard that great ship, the "S.S. New York" we lived in the staterooms of the former liner and prince of the Eastern Steamship Lines. Two of us to a room, we had all the luxuries of life. The inevitable lifeboat drills went on every day, but now when your turn to command the boat came, you were dealing with great sixty-passenger craft that when you were careless, or when wind and current were against you, you might find the long sweep tossing, and so mean projecting you, into the proverbial drink. So then the unfortunate coxswain was tried before the "Captain's Mast", or Court and usually the verdict

was, "Deserting your helm, ten hours extra duty". So like taxes, the extra-duty boys were always with us, but of course with additions from other infractions of rules and shortcomings. After school you could hear them chipping on the hull, swabbing desks (the ship was seven decks high) and polishing endless brass and copper equipment.

.... When I completed my preliminary training I was given the following papers: "Certificate of Efficiency to Lifeboatman" which is a Coxswain rate, "Fireman's Certificate" which covered Engineering, and the "Gunner's Certificate" for the time I spent in the Gunnery School.

.... A new uniform has been put in use where before we wore the same suits as the Navy. The new uniform, called the "zoot suit" is sailor-like but plain and void of stripes and trim.

.... For pay we get Navy pay, plus 40% for Station Duty and double that, plus Port Bonus, for Sea Service. I am a Second Class Fireman and am attached to the Refrigeration Maintenance Crew, which is, of course one phase of Engineering.

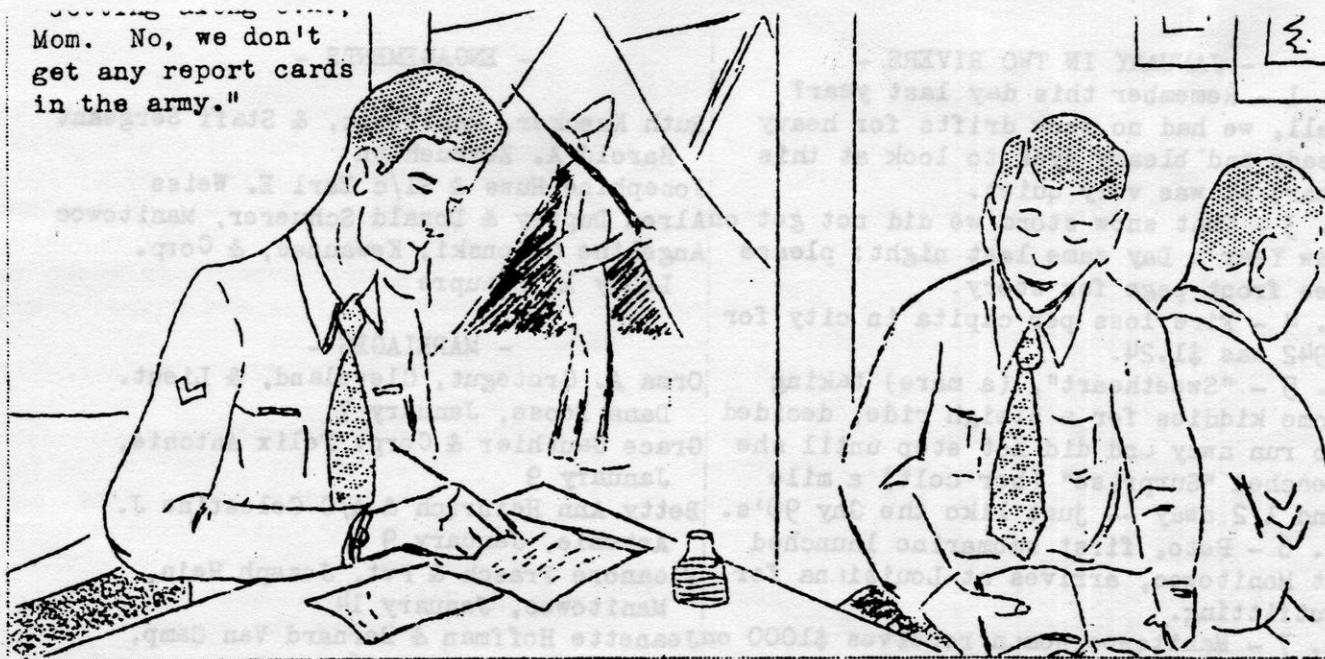
.... Around the first of December my brother, Hilary, who is in the Army Air Corps, and who had trained at Curtis Wright in California, came here from Arizona at William's Field. Since then we have been having a rare good time exploring New York and seeing current Broadway shows.

.... My sincere New Year wishes for happiness to you all.

Sincerely,
Edwin Boettger, F 2/c
U. S. Maritime Service
U. S. Naval Reserve.

Continued from Page One....
But the snow here
in this town will disappear
soon. And what's more,
the war
will too, when you
fellows have shown
them what you're fighting for--
Towns that belong to you all over America,
and those you want to be with
when the war is won
so that together
you may laugh over
the things you love--
All those things--
And maybe the weather
in Two Rivers!

Mom. No, we don't
get any report cards
in the army."



BE MY VALENTINE

Here it is again - February, the sweetheart month. Everybody asking everybody else to be their valentines -- So here's our message to you all -- "The Sweethearts of Two Rivers" wherever you may be --

"Oh, please be mine,"
Said Ivan Klein
To his little wife.

"You'll always be
My honey-bee
And sweeten up my life."

Dear Eddie LeClair
We all declare
You're number one on our list

We love you so
Please be our beau
You'd better or feel our fist.

Oh, Chummy Strohm
Just fills our dome
With thoughts of love and such

His strong physique
Makes women weak
He thrills us, oh, so much.

Lothar Krueger
Is very meager
With his attention to any girl

They nearly swoon
When he enters the room
He sets their hearts in a whirl.

When Roy Krenke
Drops his hanky
The girls all rush to his aid

They live in hopes
That when he elopes
She'll be the lucky maid.

Harold Pries
Will never cease
To fill our hearts with admiration

We give a sigh
As we all try
To get a little of his attention.

Paul Neveau
Remains true
To his wife back home

Of her he thinks
As to her health he drinks
In each place that he may roam.