

Personals

Mr. John Smith of Kitchener visited Acton friends this week.

When Dorothy Clayton was home from Galt over the week-end.

Don Force is home from Pickering College for the Christmas holidays.

June Talbot is home from Loretto Academy, Waterdown, for the vacation.

Joan Rumley is home from Branksome Hall, Toronto for the Christmas vacation.

Mrs. Charles Schieffer who has been visiting her sister, Mrs. Nellie Kelly at Acton has returned to Maryland.

Stoker 1st Class James Robertson and Miss Marie Mitchell of Hamilton spent a few days last week with LAC and Mrs. Stuart Lantz and other Acton friends.

Friends are pleased to see Mr. Leonard Atkinson is able to be home again and with improved health, after several months treatment at Christie Street Hospital in Toronto.

Leading Wren Jean Simons, W.R. C.N.S. of H.M.C.S. Cornwallis, Nova Scotia has been spending this week as the guest of her aunt and uncle, Mr. and Mrs. George Gibbins.

Church News

United Church of Canada
Acton, Ontario
"The Friendly Church"
REV. A. WALTER FOSBERY, M.A., B.D., Minister
Parsonage—Howar Avenue

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24th, 1944
Christmas Worship Services
11.00 a.m.—Morning Worship, Sermon—"With the Shepherds to Bethlehem."
12.15 p.m.—Church School.
7.00 p.m.—Evening Worship, Candle Lighting and Carol Singing Service.
Tableau Vivant—Manger Scene.
Wed. Dec. 27th, 8 p.m.—Mid-week Service at the home of Mrs. Dawkins on Willow Street.
"O, Come, Let Us Adore Him!"
A Happy Christmas to All

Halton Member Gave Address At Warden's Dinner

Told Complete Story of Developments of Re-enforcement Question

Speaking at the Warden's Dinner on Monday evening at the Estaminet in Burlington, Mr. Hughes Cleaver, member for Halton County gave a synopsis of developments regarding re-enforcements that will prove interesting not only to those who were permitted to attend the function but to residents of the entire County. Below we give the text of his address.

"We have recently had a crisis in this country arising out of the shortage of re-enforcements for the army. In addition to the open sessions which have been reported in the press we had a secret session. I cannot give you information which I heard at the secret session but I am at perfect liberty to give you all other information which I have learned.

In my remarks to-night I can give you a fairly complete picture and I know that you want to hear the story.

This is the tenth Warden's Dinner at which I have had the opportunity and responsibility of addressing you as your federal member. Politics are out of place at a meeting of this nature. While I will carefully endeavor to abide by this rule yet I should warn you at once that the subject which I am discussing to-night makes my position rather difficult. I know that you want to hear the full story about the lack of infantry re-enforcement and it may well be that as a member supporting the Government I may be prejudiced, however I will give the facts as I see them letting the chips fall where they may. I will say nothing intentionally to offend anyone and I am of course assured in advance that my Conservative friends in the audience will at least discount my remarks to their true proportions. Indeed I will be fortunate if they do not understate them.

On October 18th Colonel Ralston returned from Overseas and immediately met the Prime Minister and reported that a serious shortage of infantry re-enforcements would develop before the end of the year and asked that a sufficient number of draftees should be conscripted. Cabinet Council was called immediately on the following day and a memorandum was received from Army headquarters accordingly. In the debate in the House of Commons much was said about a telegram from Overseas which Colonel Ralston saw early in August. The importance of this message was both emphasized and minimized but the fact remains that it was not shown to the Prime Minister nor the Cabinet and the first inkling of any shortage which was received by the Prime Minister or the Cabinet was late in October. No one disputes this fact.

To us ordinary individuals when we have a re-enforcement pool of fully trained men now Overseas which runs into many tens of thousands plus another 120,000 volunteers in Canada, of which at least one-half are physically fit for infantry service Overseas, it is difficult for us to understand how a shortage could have occurred in any branch of the army. Our total army commitments is six divisions. Our total voluntary enlistments are over three times that amount. How could a shortage have occurred when these figures do not include the draftees. It is equally difficult for us to understand why it was necessary for Col. Ralston to go Overseas to find out that a shortage was developing in one branch of the army re-enforcements. But notwithstanding all of these facts an infantry shortage did occur and the only apparent source from which the shortage could be made good in time was from 16,000 draftees in Canada whose infantry training was well advanced.

In order that you may fully understand the problem may I digress for a moment to explain the facts. In previous wars most of our army was infantry but in this war on account of its highly mechanized nature all nations were led to stress the use of modern equipment. This time the infantry only represents one fifth of Canada's Army. The infantry represents a total front line personnel of less than 35,000 in the Canadian Army.

Canada is not fighting this war alone. We have Allies. We are only one small member of the allied team. Total war for Canada in these circumstances means that we should do what we can best do for the common cause. As a result of these facts it was decided that one half of our war effort, at least one half, if not more, would be war production. We have over a million workers in war industry. In addition to building and manning our own navy and our own air force we are giving away annually a billion dollars worth of tanks, planes, guns, shells, ships and food to our allies. We also decided as to what would be our maximum goal with respect to our naval force, our air force and our army and no criticism has been made with respect to these decisions. All of our commitments have been fully kept.

Now let us come to the army. We agreed as to what size it should be

and we agreed unanimously. Our army headquarters forecast what our casualties would be and we made plans to provide for a steady flow of re-enforcements to meet these forecasted casualties. When manpower of a nation is being used right up to its full limit it would be prodigal to waste manpower to have re-enforcements trained and sitting around, kidding their heels, a long period of time in advance of the time when they would be required. The practical thing to do is to have a steady and an ample flow of re-enforcements passing through the training camps. The forecasted army casualties as to the over-all picture have proved to be very accurate and to-day we have a total re-enforcement pool overseas quite as large as we planned and quite ample but as to infantry, which represents only one fifth of our army, a very serious error was made. Our infantry casualties have nearly doubled what we estimated they would be. It is futile at this time to blame anyone for this error but it is only common sense to state that the error should have been detected sooner and the Minister of National Defence should not have required to go overseas to learn of it.

On the 19th of October last, the Cabinet was faced with this urgent problem. No one suggested but what re-enforcements had to be found. The only difference of opinion was as to the best means of meeting the emergency. Whether we like it or not we have a large group in Canada who are opposed to conscription until it is absolutely necessary. This group are not all French Canadians. Seventy-two per cent of the draftees are English speaking. Of the group who are opposed to conscription until it is necessary a large majority of them will support conscription when it is necessary but the actual need must first arise.

From now on I speak only for myself. If I had been a member of the Cabinet and facing up to our actual conditions here I would first want to know if the re-enforcement problem could be solved by a transfer of men from branches of the army where we now have a surplus to the infantry where we have a shortage. If I found this could not be done in time I would want time to at once acquaint the general public of the facts. I would then discharge the officers who neglected to report the shortage which started to develop many months ago. All of this would take only a matter of weeks and I would then enforce conscription to the extent that it was necessary.

In substance this is practically what happened. The Minister of Defence was not content to have any delay and he resigned. The Prime Minister and the new Minister of Defence appealed to the 16,000 infantry trained draftees to enlist voluntarily. He is criticised for failing to threaten them that they would be conscripted if they did not enlist at once. He would have been equally criticised if he had threatened. The Prime Minister has reminded us that when we launch a Victory Loan campaign we do not threaten people that if they do not subscribe voluntarily we will conscript their wealth. He sees no good reason for threatening our soldiers in any way different to the way in which we treat wealth. The campaign for volunteers would have succeeded if everyone would have supported it. Instead of supporting the campaign for volunteers the Conservative Opposition, the Conservative press and even the officers commanding the draftees joined in a campaign to attack the voluntary system and to blame the Government.

When it became apparent that the appeal for volunteers could not succeed in getting the necessary re-enforcements in time then an Order-in-Council was passed on November 23rd, just one month and three days after the emergency occurred, conscripting for Overseas service 16,000 draftees. 5,000 are sailing this month. Another 5,000 are sailing in January and the balance at the rate of 2,000 a month. This additional number of men will adequately supply our re-enforcement pool for infantry until next May. Both the Prime Minister and General MacNaughton have definitely announced that while the voluntary system will be continued yet if at any time in the future further draftees are required they will be conscripted.

What has been done was exactly what Colonel Ralston asked for when he returned from Overseas and as a consequence when the vote was taken he supported the Government. It is true that he complained of the month's delay but I leave my audience to decide as to whether this complaint is reasonable. It is also true that he now contends that all of the draftees should be conscripted now whether they will be ever needed or not. Here again I leave it to my audience to decide whether this is wise in the light of actual conditions as we have them in Canada. We still have a large body of people who are opposed to unnecessary conscription and some of them live in this very County. Is there any justification for needlessly antagonizing them? Is there anything to be gained by the needless show of compulsion or force? It might cause serious trouble and is there any compensating gain?

Right now I am going to talk politically but I trust not offensively. Will anyone tell me of any good reason why the Conservative party would oppose conscription as they actually oppose conscription as they actually

Happy Christmas To All



Our Wish to One and All is that Your Christmas will be the Happiest Possible and the Year ahead bring Greater Joy and Happiness

Whitham's Garage

YOUNG STREET, ACTON — JOE WHITHAM

Season's Greetings

May this holiday season bring happiness to all your homes. We thank all for past kindnesses and for the future we pledge to continue to serve you in the best possible way.



A MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL

F. L. Wright

GENERAL INSURANCE and REALTOR

Christmas Greetings



May the Christmas Season bring everyone in our community a good measure of happiness and may we extend to One and All that old but sincere Christmas greeting

A HAPPY CHRISTMAS

Store Closed All Day Tuesday—Boxing Day

LOVELL BROS.

MILL STREET — ACTON, ONTARIO



Our Very Best Wishes To You

We are saying it in person to all whom we can see. And to be sure that we have not missed anyone, we here and now send our Very Best Wishes to You for a Very Merry Christmas.

STORE CLOSED MONDAY and TUESDAY

Our Store will be Closed on Tuesday, December 26th as well as on Christmas Day

W. D. TALBOT

MILL STREET — ACTON, ONTARIO



A Bright and Happy Christmas To All

At this glad season of the year we renew again the remembrance of our happy relationships of the past. We wish for All our Friends, Customers and for Everyone a Bright and Happy Christmas and abundance of Good Cheer throughout the coming year.

Pallants' Clothing Store

(Continued on Page Eight)

Weekly War Commentary

(Continued from Page Three)

German Counter-Attack

At the week-end the Germans launched their biggest and fiercest counter-attack in the west since D-Day and by mid-week had plunged more than 20 miles inside Belgium. A news blackout was clamped on this sector of the front but reports seeping through said that American First Army positions had been overrun for 20 miles northward from Luxembourg's northern tip and that little country also has been re-invaded by the Nazis. One dispatch said that the important Belgium town of Malmédy had fallen but there was no confirmation.

The Germans were said to be fighting with a new-born ferocity, throwing a new V-weapon of undisclosed nature against both the first and ninth American army sectors, and feeding heavy concentrations of armour into key points despite heavy losses.

A shortage of ammunition, admitted by both Gen. Eisenhower and President Roosevelt, may be a deciding factor in this battle.

Berlin propagandists meanwhile, were making the most of the situation. It was hinted that the Nazi counter offensive may be a peace drive designed—through attrition—to gain something better than unconditional surrender for Germany. German broadcasters also used the counter-attack as an answer to the question of Hitler's whereabouts. The German radio said: "We can tell you now why Hitler has been silent. He is not ill but has been busy preparing this new offensive down to the minutest detail."

Prime Minister Churchill told the Commons a great battle was going on along the western front but he refused to give details and supported Gen. Eisenhower's action in clamping a news blackout on the latest developments. Mr. Churchill also refused to give a general review of the war and the Greek issue until after Christmas though he did say the situation in Greece where British troops are fighting Greek resistance troops had improved. He made it clear however that if the Commons wanted an immediate review of the Greek picture, it would have to take a vote of censure and his government would stand or fall on the outcome of such a vote. Mr. Churchill's challenge was not accepted.

BURLINGTON

Word was received this (Wednesday) morning that Pte. Davidson Peart, son of Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Peart, Guelph Line, had been killed in action in Italy on Dec. 4th.

According to a trade paper report a new local construction company, The Bayview Construction Co., with headquarters at the Bank of Commerce Building, Water streets, have now applied for a charter.

One of the worst storms in years hit Burlington and district early Tuesday morning, and as a result traffic was completely tied up and business generally was at a standstill during the day.

Burlington Sea Cadets are to have fine new headquarters of their own to be located on the Brant Park property. This was decided on at a meeting of the committee of the Burlington-Nelson Navy League branch, held on Thursday evening.

John Anderson of Toronto, who resides at the Sherwood Inn, suffered severe head cuts and body injuries when it is alleged that he came in contact with a car as he crossed over Brant Street in front of the public library shortly after midnight on Friday last.—Gazette.

A. Floyd Smith Jeweler

WATCHES — CLOCKS JEWELRY

75 Quebec Street, West GUELPH ONT.

MacDONALD'S Used Furniture Antiques

Upholstering, Refinishing, Repairs Guaranteed Highest Quality Work at Reasonable Prices

80 Macdonell St. Guelph

Has Something New Been Added?

A new job—increased responsibilities—a new baby—a new home... all of these changes increase your VALUE—and the need of your dependents for adequate life insurance protection.

HOWARD GRAFF NORTH AMERICAN LIFE Acton, Ontario Phone 58 R 12

GREGORY THEATRE

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 22
"MAN FROM FRISCO"
Michael O'Shea, Anne Shirley Musical "Musical Movieland." Cartoon, "Helicopter" Chapter 5 "The Great Alaskan Mystery."

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23
Matinee at 3
"PORT OF FORTY THIEVES"
Lynn Roberts, Richard Powers
"HI GOOD LOOKIN'"
Harriett Hillard, Kirby Grant "Fox News."

MONDAY, DECEMBER 25
"TWO GIRLS AND A SAILOR"
Van Johnson, June Allyson
Disney "How to Play Golf." Sport, "Mallard Flight."