

**THE GEORGETOWN HERALD**

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**The Editor's Corner**

**A WAR-TIME CONVENTION**

Advised as a "war-time" convention, editors from Quebec and Ontario weekly newspapers gathered at the Royal York Hotel in Toronto last weekend to talk over their problems, to exchange ideas about how to produce better newspapers, and to enjoy the round of interesting events planned by the executive. And it was a war-time convention right from the start, for by coincidence on Thursday night Toronto district was staging a test blackout. As we sat on the train which bore us towards the city, the signal came at ten o'clock, and the conductor advised passengers to pull down the blinds, while coach lights were dimmed. It was an eerie feeling riding through the black night shut off from the world outside in which no light gave a clue to the masses of humanity clustered in the metropolis. Curiosity got the better of two or three travellers, who couldn't resist the impulse to raise their blind for a glimpse outside, but as a whole, everyone accepted the blackout with the seriousness which was intended.

**BUSINESS**

The Convention lasted two days, and as is customary, the mornings were devoted to business sessions, while entertainment was provided in the afternoons. On Friday morning, it was a treat to hear Hugh Templin, editor of the Fergus News-Record, give some impressions of his trip to England last fall. Mr. Templin's articles have been running in the Herald for some months past, and his talented pen has given our readers an intimate glimpse into life in the Old Land. Mr. Templin had copies of English daily newspapers, most of which are now allowed to print only four pages. Not only is there a waiting list of advertisers, but subscriptions are rationed too, and it isn't easy for a new subscriber to get his morning paper. Another Friday-morning speaker was Andy Clark, whose Neighbourly News broadcast on Sunday mornings brings news of rural Ontario to the vast CBC audiences in the east. Mr. John Atkins, former Oakville publisher and now administrator of printing and publishing for the War-time Prices and Trade Board, was another on the program and he outlined some of the effects of price administration on weekly publishers.

Highlight of the Saturday morning business was an explanation of Selective Service by E. M. Little, of Ottawa, the newly-appointed director. Under the regulations there is nothing to stop a man leaving his present job, but the Selective Service Board controls his re-employment to assure war production first call on his services. This means that should a man leave his present employment, it is required that he have a permit before he is allowed to take a new position, even if it is a similar kind of work to that he was performing in his previous job. Agricultural workers do not come under this category — all these being frozen to their jobs as of March 23rd. However, they are allowed to move to seasonal work without a permit, and if they were working at some seasonal job on March 23rd, it does not mean that they lose their classifications as farm workers.

**MANNING DEPOT AND BREN GUNS**

On Friday, the publishers and their wives were luncheon guests of the RCAF at Manning Depot, where they afterwards viewed a drill display and were conducted on a tour of the buildings. Following this, the men were taken to the John Inglis plant, where thousands of workers are turning out war products — the publicized Bren gun being only one of a dozen such products. A trip through a large munitions plant is an unsatisfying experience. There is too much ground to cover, too many things to see, and impressions tend to be confused when one afterwards tries to recall all he has seen.

Our guide at the Inglis plant turned out to be Cliff Hume, whose father is a Georgetown native. Cliff is a shop superintendent, and says he used to spend vacations with relatives in this district when he was a youngster. In fact, we never got very far away from Georgetown during the whole trip. Back at Manning Depot, we watched a rehearsal for the Woodhouse & Hawkins radio show, where Frances Cramer, who recently became Mrs. Norm Barber, was warbling one of her numbers. Outside, we bumped into Strat-Bakogeorge, one of the 1941 hockey team. During the convention we made the acquaintance of R. M. Lavery, publisher of the Woodbridge Advertiser, who went to High School in Georgetown during the last war, and stayed with the Misses Young down on Main Street.

**Everybody on Refugee Ship Excambion Seemed to Have Thrilling History**

This is the eighteenth and final story of a trip to Britain and back again in wartime. The writer, Hugh Templin, editor of the Fergus News-Record, went at the invitation of the British Consul and represented Canada's weekly newspapers.

Before the United States entered the war, 100 of the most popular papers legal were rather dingy shipping office. One of them had a certain air of romance about it for it belonged to Pan American Airways, whose big Clipper planes were supposed to fly from Lisbon to New York three times a week. It was one of the main streets in downtown Lisbon, in the district occupied by the banks, the money changers and the pawn shops. All of these places were well known to thousands of refugees from Nazi-dominated Europe who had escaped to the freedom of Lisbon and who hoped to go to the United States or elsewhere in the New World out of Hitler's reach. It was easy to imagine these refugees making their hopeful rounds. And no place would be more hopeful than the ticket office of Pan American Airways for only the greatly privileged with "pull" at Washington or London or Ottawa ever set foot in these ships with wings.

In October, 1941, there was another place visited by thousands of these persons who still hoped to escape. That was the office of American Export Lines. This was a steamship company with ambitions to take to the air as well and break the monopoly enjoyed by Pan American. But the war with Japan intervened before the first Export Lines plane took to the air. The company was sending three ships a month to Lisbon and the most famous of them all was the B B Excambion.

**Out of Europe by Refugee Ship**

The eight Canadian editors, temporarily stranded in Lisbon, had return tickets for the Clipper, but the weather was interfering with plane schedules and danger was drawing closer all the time. There would not even be a boat out for two weeks if we did not buy the Excambion so, one or two at a time we gave in to the inevitable, turned our Clipper tickets over to the British Embassy and received boat tickets in exchange. The Atlantic is wide between Lisbon and New York, about twice as wide as from Newfoundland to Ireland. The water is blue and warm, with occasional dolphins jumping out of the waves and playing around the ship.

There was some delay in leaving Lisbon. I had come on board early, after paying out my last few excursions to the Portuguese police station to get a passport and my last chance to get a passport of the departing travellers. I had intended to keep that money for souvenirs and was a bit sore about it.

The harbor was interesting, as all harbors are. From the land side, big cranes were lifting cases of the crates of radios and guns and boxes of unmarked goods. On the river side, odd little sailing vessels, unmanicured from Phoenician days, had cargoes of cork brought from the interior. They were family affairs, evidently, and inhabited not only by people, but by dogs, hens and fat chickens.

It was dark when the Excambion pulled out and sailed down the broad Tagus river. Now that I was leaving it, Lisbon looked lovely, set on its seven hills, one of the few brilliantly

lighted cities left in Europe. The last bit of Europe I could see was the red moon sign over the gambling casino at Estoril.

There was a feeling of tension on board that decreased gradually as the day passed, but flared up again as Irish ones came in. Just before the Excambion left Lisbon, there came word that an American destroyer had been torpedoed by the Germans. It seemed that the United States might be in the war at any moment. Two days out, we heard that an American passenger ship had been sunk just south of us. Most of us took on a new restlessness.

About half-way across the Atlantic, there was fresh anxiety. A grey ship was approaching from the north, giving no signal. It looked like a merchantman, but as it came closer, the passengers with glasses could see its guns. The Canadians took it for granted it was a ship of the British Navy, and it seemed that some of the newly aliens on board feared the same thing. If it came alongside, somebody would have to be taken off, whether British or German. The grey ship crossed our bows several miles ahead and then put on speed and was quickly out of sight. None of us ever knew what ship it was, but the Captain shared our view that it was British. From that time on we felt safer.

**Living With Adversity**

The stories of the people on this ship would have filled a library, and many of them were horror stories, mentioned some of them in the first story of this series, written while on the Atlantic. But I omitted the most exciting of them all.

There was one passenger we did not notice till the ship was a day out of Lisbon. His real name never appeared on the passenger list. He had been private secretary to a ruler of a European country, a man who had just disappeared when Hitler took over the country by force and treachery. This man had been active in his opposition to Germany and he had kept one step ahead of the Gestapo, getting to Lisbon at last, though it took him two years to reach it. Perhaps he grew careless, or his luck deserted him there. The German crowd in Portugal found him and had him arrested on some charge. But the British were alert. The day the Excambion sailed, he got out of jail somehow and was nailed up in a packing box. It came aboard with the shipment of goods, under the eyes of the Portuguese police. For a day, he stayed down in the hold, then came on deck, a free man again. At Bermuda, he left the ship, to land on British soil at last.

By comparison with this man, our real live Prince of the House of Bourbon, pretender to the throne of France, and a French Admiral going to join the Free French, seemed ordinary indeed.

High regard for Secret Service. It was at Bermuda that the British Secret Service took a big jump in our estimation and the Canadians had a chance to stick their chests out a little farther.

The arrival of the Excambion at Bermuda was exciting enough. The negro pilot came out in his little launch and boarded the ship just be-

fore dark. Bermuda consists of a small group of islands, strategically situated in mid-Atlantic, with Hamilton the chief city. To get to Hamilton harbor, the ship had to pass through a long bay strewn with mines. The open path was a zig-zag affair and the ship moved slowly from one marker to another, the searchlight continually moving over the water. One mistake there would be just too bad.

In the harbor at last, we were well assured that the Canadians were free to go on shore, along with the King's Messenger, but all others must stay on board for search and questioning. It was Bermuda's rainy season and the water was pouring down in torrents, and I had seen Bermuda before, so I stayed on board and watched proceedings.

It was an interesting process. The person questioned sat at a little table

A naval officer conducted the investigation in French, German or whatever other language the passenger understood best, while a girl from the censorship staff took down every word in shorthand in that language. It soon became apparent that these men and women knew an amazing amount about our fellow-travellers—more than we had learned in a week with them. And they knew the cities in Europe whence they came, and could detail the facts in their stories. It was a thorough investigation, which only the British subjects and those few Americans in the diplomatic service escaped, and it took most of the night. When it was done, we knew how the British can crack up on the damage done by bombing and can collect other scraps of interesting and valuable information.

No doubt, the United States has

(Continued on Page 8)

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**LEAVE GEORGETOWN**

Eastbound	Westbound
a 7:04 a.m.	10:00 a.m.
9:34 a.m.	o 11:25 a.m.
12:09 p.m.	2:20 p.m.
2:24 p.m.	ad 4:45 p.m.
4:54 p.m.	b 5:40 p.m.
6:34 p.m.	e 7:15 p.m.
9:19 p.m.	g 8:20 p.m.
b 1:50 a.m.	f 10:05 p.m.
	11:35 p.m.

a-Daily except Sunday.  
b-Sundays and holidays only  
c-To Elkheter.  
d-To Stratford.  
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Daylight Saving Time  
**Going East**

Passenger	6:55 a.m.
Passenger and Mail	10:05 a.m.
Passenger and Mail	6:45 p.m.
Passenger, Sunday only	8:21 p.m.
Passenger, daily	9:43 p.m.
(Stops for Toronto and east of Toronto passengers only.)	

**Going West**

Passenger and Mail	8:38 a.m.
Passenger, Sat. only	2:15 p.m.
Passenger daily except Saturday and Sunday	6:14 p.m.
Passenger and Mail	6:45 p.m.
Passenger, Sundays only	11:30 p.m.

**Going North**  
Passenger and Mail 8:45 a.m.

**Going South**  
Passenger and Mail 6:05 p.m.  
Depot Ticket Office—Phone 387

**RED CROSS FEATURED**

We wish that every reader could have been with us on Saturday afternoon, when the editors visited the building at 129 College Street, where parcels are packed by the Canadian Red Cross Society for prisoners-of-war. At the present time, 40,000 of these parcels are packed every week, and this figure will be doubled before the year is out. Each parcel weighs eleven pounds and contains a carefully chosen assortment of food to supplement prison camp rations for one week. Shipments are sent to the International Red Cross at Geneva, Switzerland, and distributed from there to European prison camps.

"Are our boys getting these parcels?" said Mr. Urquhart, who showed the group through the depot. "I cannot say for sure, but we cannot believe that reports from dozens of sources acknowledging that they are, can all be false." In each parcel, an acknowledgement card is enclosed, and when this is received, the card is sent to relatives of the prisoners to be checked for authenticity of signature. To date, there have been no discrepancies found in these, which is one proof that the parcels are reaching their destination.

The next stop on Saturday afternoon was at the Red Cross Blood Donor clinic, where movies showed how the blood is taken and processed for the precious serum which has already saved thousands of lives in this war. One of the greatest medical discoveries of this war has been the method of processing whole blood into dried serum by a freezing and de-watering process which converts the blood plasma into a powdered serum which can be stored indefinitely wherever it is needed. Blood is collected at clinics across Canada and shipped to Toronto's Connaught Laboratories, where it is processed, and sent overseas. Dr. C. H. Best, well-known in Georgetown, where he has his summer home, is credited with the development of the blood serum.

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