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Notes and Comments

The Wise Course for Councils

The spirit being exhibited by the municipal councils in both Whitchurch and Markham Townships respecting road expenditures for this season are both wise and sensible. The government (Dept. of Highways), had drastically cut the amount of money to these municipalities on which the Department will pay the usual 50 per cent. It is customary and necessary each year to make out a budget of the probable expenditures, and this must be ratified by the Department early in the year. When these estimates were submitted, thousands were cut from them, and the councils have wisely determined to hold their expenditures to within the amount set by the Department.

If there is any tendency for the municipalities to disregard the budget, and spent thousands of dollars over and above the amount set, the municipal ratepayers would have to pay it all themselves, for the Departmental 50 per cent would not be contributed.

Further, the Department would be quick to seize the idea of further reductions next year, in the hope that the municipal councils would shoulder still more of the road costs themselves.

In the best interests of the ratepayers, all townships would do well to make every effort to reduce their road costs to the amount of the budget approved by the Department of Highways.

New Walks Appreciated as Timely Work

The Village Council has completed a program of cement sidewalk building that is a credit to their effort. There was a popular demand for new walks, and with the mounting accident list, something had to be done. We congratulate the reeve and his councillors who staged the program just being completed. The tax payers will not find any burden on their hands, for careful manipulation of town funds in the past had provided the money in advance to pay for the walks in cash. That too, is something more to be appreciated by the ratepayers.

Critics are Liable to be a Hindrance

We do not envy Rt. Hon. W.L.M. King his great job today as prime minister of Canada. Despite the impressive effort this country has made in getting on an industrial footing such as was never dreamed to be possible, to bolster our defences in Britain and in other parts of the world, there is still the insistent demand for conscription of man-power from certain quarters, while there is equally as determined opposition to conscription in Quebec, and to a much lesser degree in other parts of Canada. Not all who voted for Mr. King's plebiscite are anxious to see conscription introduced.

What is a leader to do under these circumstances? Our opinion is that if the King government deems conscription of men more vital to the war effort than the present tremendous and growing output of war materials, then he should bring in such a measure. On the other hand, the government should not be stampeded by a group of politicians who only see some advantage to their own position.

We all want to win the war, and it is a shame that there are those who will harass the government in its every effort, no matter what turn is made. However sincere, they do the war effort harm.

A leader with the wisdom of Solomon, and we do not concede Mr. King possessed that, could not escape criticism in these days, and this may be some comfort perhaps.

Red Cross Supplies Millions of Comforts

Thousands of women are working in the 2,600 branches of the Canadian Red Cross Society all across Canada to keep up the production of comforts and clothing and hospital supplies for the relief of human suffering. Stouffville is one of the branches, Markham is another.

Last year 6,816,804 articles poured into Red Cross warehouses from these busy branches.

For the reason that their mission is to alleviate pain and suffering in war torn countries, and to assist those who have lost everything they possess, we all want to help in the present drive to raise nine millions. We give with a thankful heart to the knowledge that our own security and comfort has not been infringed on.

Success to the New Newmarket Paper

The Newmarket Era and the Newmarket Express have amalgamated, thus bringing one more of the few remaining two-paper towns in Ontario, to the common status of a one-paper town. This is the logical thing to have happened in the newspaper field of that town, and The Tribune hastens to add it's blessing to the new enterprise, and to wish for the Newmarket Era-Express the success it deserves. Mr. Andrew O. Hebb, editor of the Era will become editor of the new paper, thus assuring the people of Newmarket and district a high class weekly under the direction of a competent and able writer.

BEING TRAILED BY THE GERMAN GESTAPO NOT A PLEASANT EXPERIENCE

This is the 16th in the series of articles describing a trip to Britain last September and October. The writer, Hugh Templin, editor of the Fergus News-Record, represented the Canadian Weekly Newspapers Association and the stories are written exclusively for the weekly newspapers of Canada.

I'll never forget the night we left Ireland behind and flew away toward Portugal in the largest seaplane I ever saw, the good ship "Berwick," which later became famous when it carried Winston Churchill back over the Atlantic from Bermuda to Britain.

We left the peaceful little village of Adare, in Southern Ireland, about ten o'clock on Friday night, driving by bus along the windings, walled roads through a couple more tiny hamlets, and down one last hill to the seacoast. Once again, there was a hurried session in the little customs house, though no baggage was opened for inspection. One more entry was made in our passports, and we fled out on the pier and down a shaky gangplank to the launch.

It all seemed strange to me that night. There I was in Ireland, where I had never expected to be. Behind us on the hills, lights shone in the few houses, not exactly what we had become accustomed to during a month in England, where everything would have been black. On the pier a powerful searchlight swung around picking out at times the shape of the big winged boat out on the estuary, throwing its black shadow on the cliff behind until it looked like two ships, one grey and one black.

One launch had gone out with the mail and I climbed into another with a dozen fellow passengers. One or two loads had already gone aboard. The bay was rough and our launch went out beyond the seaplane, drifting back past it. The crew missed the rope thrown from the plane and tries again. The second time they had better luck, and we climbed aboard the big float which is a part of the body of the plane and down through the narrow door.

The interior looked familiar. This was another Boeing plane, similar to the Clippers by which I had crossed the Atlantic some weeks before. Even the pattern on the tapestry that covered the walls was the same. But this was a later model and larger.

There were no berths for the passengers that night. There wasn't room for them. We were packed in too closely, and we sat up all night in the comfortable seats. After we rose from the water, there were no lights either. The plane was to fly down opposite the unfriendly coast of France, always in danger from enemy raiders, and the only safe way to go was in the dark. And even that wasn't too safe, as we all realized. So we sat sprawled around in all sorts of queer shapes, trying to sleep—and having some success, at that.

Aboard the Berwick I don't think Pan American Airways would have tried to fly a Clipper on a night like that. The waves were high and the wind was offshore. That made it necessary to go away out into the estuary and taxi toward the land, with the ship gaining height fast enough to clear the range of low hills. Besides, the plane had a heavy load. Three times, the Captain tried before he finally lifted off the waves and into the air. Each time, he went farther out into the open ocean.

I sat at the little window and looked out at the waves, thrilled beyond anything I had known on the trip before. I could see two of the four huge motors, and the long wing with a green light out, near the tip. The waves splashed up over the window when the motors speeded up. Twice the waves were so high they came up over the wing-tip, obscuring the green light. Then we turned towards land, and there was louder roar, and I could feel the slap of the wave on the bottom of the ship, growing less violent and finally disappearing, and we were in the air.

The great ship circled towards the south. The wing-tip light and all the interior lights went out. Down below, little Irish villages and the City of Limerick showed through the clouds for Ireland has no blackout. Minutes later, there were two or three light-houses, and the moon shining on the open sea, then nothing more but clouds for hours and hours.

Lisbon From the Airport
Lisbon, as seen from the air, is one of the most beautiful of cities. The Berwick arrived over the mouth of the Tagus River just before the sun came up over the hills behind Lisbon. The interior of Portugal is quite mountainous in spots. Down below, a large fleet of fishing boats could be seen on the Atlantic, mostly little sailing ships, but a few steam trawlers. Then there was Estoril, the health resort at the mouth of the river, and then Lisbon set on several hills. A new airport was being built outside the city, with broad modern roads leading to it. In contrast to

the narrow lanes of the city itself. An Oriental cemetery with little tombs inside a high wall provided an odd touch.

Twice the ship circled the city, losing height, and came down on the river beside a Pan American Clipper, preparing to leave in a few hours. "How nice it would be," I thought, "to transfer from one plane to the other, without even bothering to go ashore." But wartime travel isn't that easy in Europe.

Lisbon is one of the most romantic cities in the world at present. It's a poor magazine that hasn't had some story dealing with Lisbon and its refugees, its spies, the German Gestapo and such like. There has been a whole series of moving pictures about Lisbon, such as "One Night in Lisbon," "The Lady Has Plans," and "Affectionately Yours." The general idea seems to be that anything can happen in Lisbon. I believe that is true: anything can happen there, and most of it does happen. Some of the things that have happened are probably more exciting than anything the fiction writers have produced. But alas! Some of the true stories must be kept secret until after the war.

I didn't see much of Lisbon the first time I was there, but on the return trip I saw far too much, and I do not care if I never see Portugal again. Even when peace comes again, I think I would decline an invitation.

Lisbon After Dark

On the eastward trip, the short stay in Lisbon and suburbs held some excitement, but it was pleasant. The Clipper arrived after dark. My first impression of the Tagus River was that it consisted of acres of mud flats. The tide must have been low that night and the bright searchlights on the plane and on the shore shone on the mud as the Clipper circled around in search of its anchorage. The trip to shore was over a long pier that ended in the customs office. There the British Embassy people picked us up, supplied us with plenty of escudos (the Portuguese money) and gave the taxi driver directions where to take us.

They followed a wild taxi ride through the narrow streets of Lisbon and out of Estoril. It was far more exciting and undoubtedly more dangerous than the Clipper trip across the broad Atlantic, but we arrived breathless at the Estoril Palacia, the finest hotel in Portugal. (It is this hotel you see in some of the movies). There was a midnight dinner in the magnificent dining room, along with the crew of the Clipper, then a few hours' sleep, and away again in the early morning darkness to Cintra, the airport that is used by British, Dutch, German and Italian planes. And so to England.

Seven Days in Portugal

On the return trip, I spent seven days in Lisbon, which was about five too many. It was mid-October when autumn storms were interfering with the Clipper schedules. At first, it seemed, I might have to wait ten days for a place on a Clipper: then it was more indefinite. It might be three weeks. As it has since turned out, it might be never. A prominent Canadian who returned a few weeks later had to go by way of Africa, Brazil and Trinidad to get out of Lisbon. The city is full of people trying to get out. For some of them, it is a matter of life and death. They must leave before the Germans get them. A place on the Clipper was not to be measured in mere dollars then (though it cost over \$500, west-bound). So I stayed in Lisbon with seven other Canadians, and as the days passed slowly, our plight became so desperate that we returned at last on a refugee ship, "part of a cargo of cork," as Bishop Renison puts it.

As I have said, Lisbon is beautiful from the air. So is the rest of Portugal that I had seen from the plane. From the ground, parts of the capital city are beautiful and everything is interesting. But under its picturesque exterior, there lurk dangers, even in peace time. Now the whole city is full of danger and intrigue.

For the first time, the question of money began to bother us, when we learned we might be in Lisbon indefinitely. We could bring only \$40 each in American money out of England under the strict wartime

LUXURY GOODS TRUCKS DENIED USABLE TIRES

Under the recently-announced tire rationing order, no usable tires or tubes may be purchased for trucks engaged chiefly in carrying luxury goods, the Munitions and Supply Department states.

Except for deliveries of ice and fuel, trucks carrying commodities direct to the home will not be allowed new tires. This means, the department said, no new tires for bread, milk, grocery, fruit and other home deliveries.

The 96 tire-rationing representatives have been advised to refuse permits for new tires, retreaded tires new tubes, or retreading services for trucks used principally in the transportation of wines, beers, liquors, soft drinks, cosmetics, etc.

rules. Out of that, we had to pay our fares home from New York. Other expenses began to come up. We held a conference and pooled our resources at last, finding that we had just enough to stay one week at our hotel in Lisbon. We knew nothing of the language. For two days, we lived like paupers, hoarding every escudo, till the British Embassy came to our aid and guaranteed our hotel bill. Headquarters of the Gestapo

We stayed at the Hotel Victoria in Lisbon, not at the expensive Palacia. It had been recommended to me by an American foreign correspondent in London. "It's new and clean," he said, "so long as you don't mind staying in the same hotel as the head of the German Gestapo in Portugal."

I laughed that off. In London, that sounded like an added adventure. So on my recommendation we stayed at the Victoria. It was new, and clean, and cheap, and the meals were good. And we saw the head of the Gestapo, not just once, but too often. His men kept a close watch on the eight Canadians. It gets on your nerves in a few days.

The Avenida da Liberdade is the main street of Lisbon. The name, as you may guess, means "Avenue of Liberty." It stretches north and south up a broad valley between Lisbon's ten hills. The avenue is reputed to be one of the most beautiful in all the world. I don't doubt it. It is wide. Down each side is a broad roadway. In the centre is a four-lane highway. In between the outer strips and the centre are gardens with palm trees and edible chestnuts and benches to sit on under the palms and on the grass. Here and there are sidewalk cafes, where everything can be had to drink from ice cream sodas and strong coffee to much stronger things. The roadway circles around many monuments or fountains with goldfish swimming in the waters. And all the sidewalks are of mosaic—little pieces of colored marble laboriously laid by hand into patterns. Not only are there scrolls and flowers, but the history of Portugal is written there for those who can read the language.

Up and down the Avenida, there is a steady stream of traffic. On the roadways at the side-old-fashioned street cars with open sides pass every few seconds. I never saw so many street cars on one street anywhere. Automobiles are mostly tiny cars and one could ride half a mile in a taxi for six American cents. Most of the people are on foot, many of them with bare feet.

There is poverty everywhere in Portugal and it intrudes even on the beautiful Avenida. Hundreds of women pass in an hour, with baskets on their heads containing silvery fish or grapes or flowers. Men carry cases of wine or heavier loads. One day I followed an old lady. She stopped occasionally to pick things off the street. At last she sat on a bench and I sat down beside her. She opened her hamper. Inside were bits of metal. On the lid of the basket, she had a horseshoe magnet. With the magnet, she tested all the metal scraps. The iron ones she put in one pile, the non-ferrous in another. There's no need for salvage campaigns in Lisbon.

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