

LEAD

L.I. - Sunoco. Tuesday, Dec. 25, 1945.

Christmas is traditionally a light news day - and tonight the line-up of world tidings is particularly light. For which let us be thankful.

During the years of war, the devil of battle paid not too much attention to the Feast of the Nativity, and Christmas as a news day could be sombre and heavy. Last year at this time, for example, the battle of the Bulge was on - a savage crisis of war.

No^w all that is over, and Yule-tide reverts to a peacetime status - the lightest of news days. ^{So} let's ~~be glad~~ ^{rejoice} that we haven't any war bulletins tonight.

TRUMAN

President Truman has arrived in Kansas City. That's a real bulletin - considering the kind of trip the President made today. He flew from Washington out to his home state, to be with his family for Christmas dinner at his home town - Independence, Missouri. And the flying weather made this just about as risky a Christmas as a President of the United States has ever had.

Mr. Truman was scheduled to take off at eight-eight-thirty this morning in the Presidential plane, *That plane by the way* ~~which~~ is called - "the sacred cow". A sleet storm was raging in Washington -- ~~and that was~~ no weather for ~~eight~~ either an airplane or a cow. It was impossible to fly, and the logical thing would have seemed to be a cancellation of the Christmas trip.

The President, however, refused to call it off. He said never in his life had he missed Christmas dinner with his family back home, and he wasn't going to miss it now. So he would wait a while, and may be the flying weather would improve. ~~Later he took off~~

~~And he got thru to Kansas City.~~
~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

By noon, the sleet storm had stopped, but Washington ~~was~~ was blanketed by cloud and mist - and blinding clouds were reported all the way along the route to the middlewest. Commercial flying was suspended, planes grounded!

Not so good for the sacred crow, the pilot, Lieutenant Colonel Henry Meyers, said he thought they could make it. So they took off - President Truman accompanied by a party that included reconversion director John Snyder, Mrs. Snyder and their daughter - ~~they were~~ on their way for Christmas at St. Louis - where the Presidential plane was to make a stop.

How bad the weather was is illustrated by what happened to a newspaper plane with correspondents who ~~cover~~ cover all Presidential comings and goings. The newspaper plane was to have taken off half an hour ahead of the sacred cow, but it was so badly iced that ~~that~~ the newsmen were held up until two hours after the presidential departure - it took that long to de-ice ^{the} plane.

The Sacred Cow flew through blinding clouds, ~~at its~~ ^{on} instruments, ~~flying~~ ^{Through} ~~there was~~ rain and ice, ~~and~~ ^{against} strong headwinds, ~~had to be bucked.~~
The going was so bad that the Sacred Cow was an hour late when it got to St. Louis, landed there and continued the flight to Kansas City.

At nearby Independence, Missouri, the folks at home were holding up Christmas dinner, delaying the Yuletide feast because of the Presidential flying — ~~the yuletide feast because of the Presidential flying~~ difficulties. As a result the Trumans tonight are having just about the latest christmas dinner in the history of the Truman family.

HERO

We've heard of ~~xx~~ many a presentation of the Congressional medal of honor, with superb stories of heroism accompanying the nation's highest military award. But here's one that is different from all the rest. The war Department announces that a Congressional medal is to be presented in Mexico, at the city of Neuvo Laredo, presented ~~xx~~ posthumously to the Mexican father of an American soldier.

~~xxxxxx~~
~~xxxxxxx~~ Private Manuel Perez was born at Oklahoma City, of Mexican parents - his family going back late to the south of the Rio Grande. ~~He~~ ~~was~~ One of those innumerable Mexicans in the southwest - some of American birth, some not. Taken into the Army, he was sent to the Pacific, and distinguished himself in the fighting on Luzon. Single-handed he killed at least twenty-three Jap^s~~sons~~, in a one-man assault on an enemy machine gun ~~xxx~~ nest that was gnawing down his comrades.

Manuel Perez attacked with a rifle, and kept advancing and shooting until at ^{close}~~xxxxx~~ quarters

the rifle was knocked from his hands. He snatched a gun from a Jap soldier, and continued shooting until the ammunition was gone. ~~He~~ Then he fought with the ~~rifle~~ rifle as a club ^{to} - until he was killed.

TP Manuel Perez was not the first American soldier of Mexican ancestry to earn our highest decoration. In fact, it is rather remarkable ~~how~~ how many of those Spanish names of the southwest are ~~on~~ on the list of honors awarded for heroism in the war.

MOSCOW

What about News from Moscow,
From The Foreign Ministers of the Big Three? *well,*
they had a Christmas session ~~in Moscow.~~ Nothing important,

we ~~are~~ are told. News from the Soviet Capital continues the indication of last night - that yesterday's peace conference announcement is the only big thing that is likely to develop.

The final communique, which will probably be issued tomorrow, will have something to say about the atomic bomb - a most momentous topic. But the Moscow dispatch indicates that there won't be any sensational disclosure. The chances are that the announcement will confine itself to statements that atomic problems were discussed with a spirit of goodwill. Also - that plans have been made for further atom bomb deliberations by the Big Three.

During the days before the meeting of the Foreign Ministers began, we were told ~~that it~~ ^{the meeting} was to have two principal purposes: - One - a consideration of the dark riddle of the atom; The other, plans for a ~~peace~~ peace conference. Secretary of State Byrnes

declared he was going to Moscow to launch a peace conference proposal.

In this he ~~has~~ has succeeded, as we heard last night. It is true that the ~~Peace~~ Peace Conference, which will gather some time before May First, will be of limited scope. It will consider treaties with Italy, Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary and Finland. These treaties will be drawn up in accordance with the formula demanded by Soviet Russia ^{-- that the} big powers ~~to~~ set the terms.

The peace conference of twenty-one nations ^{to} be allowed to suggest changes - suggest and nothing more. ^{And suggested} Any such ^{changes} may be accepted or may be turned down by the Big Three.

Thus, we won't have any decisive gathering of the nations to rearrange the world, like the conference of Vienna, or the Versailles peace conference. The ^{scope} won't be anything like as large; - but, at least we have a Big Three agreement on the making of peace with the satellite enemies. And, there will be a peace

conference - which Secretary Byrnes went to Moscow to get.

The social events of the Moscow proceedings were climaxed by Stalin's big banquet for American Secretary of State Byrnes and British Secretary Bevin. A lot of Russian toasts were drunk - which is not news. ~~It~~ And there was a motion picture show. Off-hand, the ~~moves~~ ^{movies} displayed to the banquetees might not seem so exciting -- ~~if~~ a film depicting the Soviet war against Japan. As we know, the Red Army went into the Far Eastern war at the eleventh hour, and hurled its offensives while the Japs were busy surrendering. So the film could hardly have been up to standard of the spectacular newsreels of the European war, or the American and British ~~war~~ hostilities in the Pacific. However, the motion picture of the Soviet war against Japan is said to have been an eye-opener, showing the immense preparations the Red Army had made for a giant war against Japan - ~~only~~ ^{--- only to have} the Jap ~~surrendered~~ in such a hurry.

FRANCE

~~Yesterday's~~
~~last night's~~ financial intimation from
France was borne out entirely today. ~~Yesterday~~
~~We noted then~~
~~that~~ all the French ~~in~~ evening newspapers were saying
the franc was about to be devalued - ~~and~~ ^{that} an announcement
^{on it} would be issued shortly. The announcement came today -
cutting the value of French money. ^{The} Franc has hitherto
been quoted at Fifty to a Dollar, two cents apiece;
~~that has been~~ ^{and a} an artificial valuation, ~~the~~ figure much
too high. Paris explains that one reason why the franc
was kept pegged at fifty to the dollar was to
discourage American soldiers in France from buying too
much. The G I's had lots of dollars, and if they could
have got ^{ten} more francs for ^{their dollars,} ~~them~~ they would have stripped
the country of goods badly needed ~~in~~ by the French
civilian population.

Now the number of ~~G~~ I's is decreasing
rapidly over there - and their excessive buying power
doesn't have to be considered so much. So the value
of the franc is being cut to less than half, the new
rate to be about a-hundred-and-nineteen to the dollar.

Instead of ~~being~~ worth two cents, the franc hereafter will be worth less than one cent, eighty-four one-hundredth of an American penny, to be precise.

The devaluation is ~~me~~ meant to stabilize French economy, discourage the ~~in~~ black market, and stimulate French ~~exp~~ exports. ~~The~~^{is} financial measure is taken by the DeGaulle government, as France ~~prepar~~^{is} to put its okay on the Bretton Woods agreement - that plan of the post-war monetary stability among the nations. So France goes to the Bretton Woods affair with a sharply devalued currency.

BETHLEHEM

The stars shone at Bethlehem last night - and so did a lot of other lights that would have astonished the three wise men from the East, if they had been journeying that way. All the way from Jerusalem to Bethlehem, ^{that historic} ~~the~~ road was made bright by the headlights of hundreds of American Army vehicles, touring cars, ^{and} ~~and~~ jeeps.

- No, they were not rolling along to Bethlehem. American soldiers were not riding, as they went on pilgrimage to the place the saviour was born. The Army cars were parked, ^{in order to} ~~and~~ lighted the road, while the soldiers marched in single file - going on foot like true pilgrims; ~~They went~~ in squads, led by their Chaplains.

At Bethlehem, the shrine was lighted with candles and the sound of bells rang out, old-fashioned Christmas chimes rung by hand. The bell ringers were Franciscan Friars, and among them the one that rang the big bell, the chimes of the deep bass tone, was Father Liska, who hails from down around Galveston, ~~Texas~~.

Wife

At Boston, Judge Samuel Eisenstadt had a surge of the Christmas spirit, and decided to hand down a decision worthy of Santa Claus, if not Solomon. A local citizen stood facing the court, charged with drunkenness. He had been on quite a riotous bender, and was lawfully entitled to something like ten days in jail.

The Judge asked him if he ~~was~~^{was} married, and the prisoner said - yes, his wife was at home, whereupon his honor thought, oh the pathos of it all - the little woman spending a lonely Christmas ~~with~~^{with} hubby ~~was~~ in the jug.

So, before imposing sentence for drunkenness the judge was seized with a yuletide impulse - which caused him to seize the telephone, and call the wife.

His Honor's ~~his~~ voice was benevolent and kindly as he spoke. ~~He might have been~~^{As though} the good Saint himself, announcing joyful news. He asked the Lady - would she like to have her husband home for Christmas?

And this was her reply: "Well, to tell

the truth, your honor", said ~~he~~^{she}, "I'd have a happier Christmas without him".

Can you guess the rest of the story? I'll bet you can't. According to all the rules of drama, the Judge should have sent the drunk to jail for Christmas - but maybe his honor thought that wife hadn't shown too much of yuletide spirit. Maybe he thought she didn't deserve a Merry Christmas. Here's the way the news dispatch ends: Prisoner dismissed, ~~the~~ Judge sends the man home anyway".

DOOLITTLE

Of all the innumerable incarnation of Santa Claus this Christmas, the one who made the biggest hit of all was a Kris Kringle in Washington - at the Walter Reed hospital. Nothing like bringing exactly the Christmas present that somebody wants. - ~~that and nothing else.~~ Of course, some people sometimes wish for the moon - but I suppose, if Santa Claus is smart enough, he'll provide even that - the moon.

At the Walter Reed Hospital, soldier patients, who had suffered amputations, were asked what they'd like for Christmas. The answers were many and varied, all sorts of things - and these were duly listed.

One patient was private Tom ~~Ceresare~~ (Chair-ah-sorrow; ~~accent on next to the last syllable~~) of Endicott, New York. Soldier Tom is lying in a plaster cast - he has been in one for months, that badly wounded in battle. When they asked him what he wanted for Christmas, he said, well - he wished Santa Claus would bring him his wife and four year old daughter, from up-state New York. But he knew that was

too much to ask, and so - well, he'd take something else.

This was reported to Santa Claus - and who do you think the good saint happened to be? He was General Jimmy Doolittle, first bomber of Tokyo and commander of that famous Eight~~h~~ Air Force against Nazi Germany. They told Jimmy Doolittle what soldier Tom wanted for Christmas, and what he figured he couldn't have.

An ordinary Santa Claus, you or I, with whiskers, a pillow and a red coat, would have^{had} to let it go at that - not being able to figure a way to whisk Tom's wife and little daughter all the way from Endicott, New York, to Washington. ~~Of course, Santa Claus does come sailing down from the North Pole, but Endicott, New York is something else again - maybe it's further north.~~

~~(But what did Jimmy Doolittle do? There's nothing like being an Air Force General - you can order out army planes, and send them this way and that. Endicott, New York? Why, just send a B-25 or a C-47.)~~

At any rate

~~And so it was that~~ Christmas at the Walter

Reed Hospital produced a surprise that drew a pandemonium ~~pandemonium~~ of cheering. Jimmy Doolittle was a Santa Claus of great dignity, handing out Christmas presents ~~as~~ to this one and that.

Then came the turn of ^{Private} ~~Private~~ Tom

~~Copacabana~~ (Chair-ah-Sorrow); time for him to get his present. Santa Claus gave a signal - and in came soldier Tom's wife and the little girl. They walked over to Tom's bed and said: "Merry Christmas, Daddy".

And that was when the cheers ^{really did cut} ~~went~~ loose.

I don't expect that ^{even} the first bombing of Tokyo or the winning of air battles against the Nazi

Luftwaffe ever provided a ~~prouder~~ ^{of greater} moment

^{glow for} Lieutenant General Jimmy Santa Claus Doolittle!

Sam Oil brought us Dynafuel as a pre-Christmas present. And maybe Santa Clause Hugh has a message about that.