

LOOK OUT BELOW!

By REV. (L. C.) FRANCIS L. SIMPSON

To bring you up to date—Father Simpson, chaplain of the 101st Division, U.S. Army paratrooper corps, arrived in Normandy on D-Day and later into Holland where he was captured by a Nazi patrol and marched to a prisoner of war camp.

Russian Liberation

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

Each night during the month of April, 1945 Sergeant Lucas and I would slip out of our rooms after the men had gone to sleep and take the radio out of its hiding place in the pulpit.

While a couple of trusted men kept watch at the foot of the barracks, our Map of Confidence and I listened to the BBC instructions to Allied prisoners or war.

Our instructions were few but specific and were broadcast in code. Colonel Alger had taught us this code before he was moved on after recovering from his ailment.

An English sergeant from the 62 section of the British Airborne also listened with us. He knew the code better than we did and was able to decipher it almost as fast as it was given.

The orders were clear. We were not to make any attempt at mass break-out or escape, for it would be foolish in these days now with assured freedom to carry a hand. The German guards fled the camp, leaving the ranking officer or noncommissioned officer to take charge of the discipline and order of the group.

"PW" was to be painted in large white block letters on top of each barracks, so that the Russian soldiers for prisoners of war; this was to prevent our stacking planes from mistaking the camp for an enemy garrison.

A large "PW" was to be marked out with hoses or anything recognizable from the air in the largest open space in the prison camp. Any prisoner violence against German guards or civilians was strictly forbidden.

German soldiers turning their backs over to the Allied prisoners were to be held and given over to the force that liberated the camp. Every precaution was to be taken to avoid prisoner casualties and to let personal leadership take place near and about the camp.

Allied flags were to be flown from the camp. The German were helpless to prevent it. Each night, as we listened to the radio, the Russian artillery muffled "boom boom" in the distance, became more and more distinct, coming closer and closer.

Russian planes flew over the city of Neurenburg and over the camp and dropped German soldiers turning their backs over to the Allied prisoners, which they did very effectively. One of the leaflets simply stated in German, "Hokosowski is your guest!"

As the reputation of Rokossovski's army was enough to panic the Germans, the roads were soon jammed with German wagons backed with the most cherished of family possessions. The occupants were children and old people heading west hoping to escape the Russians and preferring anything to falling into their hands.

Many of the guards in the camp had deserted and fled in the direction of the American lines. About a dozen guards, as well as the camp commandant, turned themselves over to the American prisoners and were locked up in the stone block house.

The small garrison of the town dug in and prepared to defend it; they also grabbed every civilian capable of firing a rifle or digging a ditch and quickly enticed them into the defense force.

We ourselves were busy digging trenches to take cover as soon as the Russians would begin to shell the town. The events of the next few days were to be among the most terrible I have ever seen.

About midnight of April 28 the Russian tanks started coming in the rear of these tanks coming from all sides was terrible. The opposition which the brave and determined Germans were able to put up was a most totally ineffectual against so much heavy equipment.

As a matter of fact, the Russian infantry, riding on the tanks (about fifteen or twenty to a tank) and firing indiscriminately, killed almost as many of their own men as they did the Germans. Some of the tanks bypassing and surrounding the town rolled on to the camp, pushing down the barbed-wire fences and guard towers of the camp.

These Russian soldiers seemed to be a lot of men with "squeeze-boxes" and "ban-jos" strapped to their backs, they fired their rifles and tommy-guns in every direction. They looked more like the old-time revolutionaries than on a

ral time to the camp. When asked for the ranking American, Sergeant Lucas brought him to my room. I offered the general a couple boxes of which I had recently come through under the Red Cross label. The general thoroughly enjoyed the cigar and coffee I served him.

After I had sent for an American soldier who spoke Russian, the conversation with the general became very interesting and enlightening. He said that the cigar was the best he had ever smoked and that the coffee was by far the best he had ever drunk. After trying one of his cigarettes I had no cause to distrust the compliment.

He said that he would send "something good" to me. A Russian soldier brought that "something" the next day. It turned out to be a big crockery jug of vodka, one whiff of which was more than enough for me.

The general told me how sorry all Russians were that President Roosevelt had died, that they considered him a great friend of Russia. He spoke delicately of the British and had contempt for the French.

He praised American equipment very highly and said that in his opinion the Russians could not have held out had it not been for American help in equipping the Russian army. This was obviously true, for almost every piece of equipment that we saw the Russians use was American.

They used Sherman tanks for the most part; and our two-and-a-half-ton trucks, our jeeps, and our armored cars were all employed almost exclusively. They had their own rocket launchers.

The Russian fighter planes that we saw in this area were all Bell Alancobras; a plane that American pilots considered obsolete and refused to fly because of the near-impossibility of hitting out in an emergency. During the course of our conversation the general drank at least ten cups of coffee and showed no signs of quitting until he had emptied the second pot into his cup.

A political commissar came to the camp, and immediately called a meeting of the ranking officers of all the nationalities in the camp. He was a fine-looking young man, well-mannered, and extremely intelligent—one of the best linguists I have ever heard of.

He told us that we would remain in the camp until contact was made with the American lines. He gave us our instructions in French, Italian, Polish, Dutch, and flawless English. He likewise said that our countries would be notified immediately that we had been liberated. The Americans (and only the Americans) might write one letter each to their families, and these would be flown to American lines. Food would be provided in abundance. Transportation would be available as soon as contact was made with the American lines in this sector of Germany.

He said that he was leaving a Russian colonel in charge of the camp and that all our needs would be satisfied, but that no one was to leave the camp without a pass from the Russian commandant. I asked the commissar for a pass in order to round up any Americans who were in working groups in or near Neurenburg. This he readily granted.

My old friend M. L'Abbe came over and asked me to go downtown with him. He wanted to see how the German priest and the people who had not fled were making out. I certainly admired the old man's courage; he apparently feared no one.

The Russian commissar had warned us that the front line troops were not to be treated to regard civilians with consideration, and the old priest was wearing the cassock of a native priest. Many of these Russian soldiers were in the front lines to work out court-martial sentences and even under the best

of circumstances were crude and rough. Expecting the worst, we were still shocked beyond words by what we saw. Just a few yards into the woods from the camp we came across a sight that outraged itself into our minds never to be erased. Several German girls and women had been raped and killed; some of them had been strung up by the feet and their throats slit.

Some Americans had told me about this, but I had found it too difficult to believe. We paused to say a few prayers. When we arrived at what was once the beautiful little city of Neurenburg, I had the feeling that I was looking upon the end of the world and Judgment Day. I almost expected to see the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse come galloping towards us.

Most of the buildings were still burning, and the streets were piled high with the debris of fallen walls. A large group of Germans, men, women, and children, were clearing the main street under guard of a Russian soldier.

Other Russian girls were directing the traffic of the tanks and armored vehicles moving through the city. Bodies in the streets were ignored, and the traffic in the way and obstructed. In places the stench of burnt flesh was horrible.

The old priest said nothing but he would sigh deeply now and then when we met some new horror. As he lifted his cassock to climb over the debris by the wagon, I would say that there were five or six bodies there. Someone had at least given them the last of the corporal works of mercy.

A shepherd dog was lying by the wagon, and though we tried to coax him to get up and come with us, he only looked up at us as dogs do when they have been beaten.

The recently printed book "Look Out Below" is published with permission of the Catholic University of America Press, Washington. All photos illustrating this series in the Courier-Journal are official U.S. Army photos.

The priest and his father were



U.S. troops enter Berchtesgaden in May, 1945, near end of World War II. City was famed as hide-away for Germany's Adolf Hitler.

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Making Marriage Click

Second-Glance Beauty

By MSGR. IRVING A. DeBLANC
(Director, Family Life Bureau, N.C.W.C.)



"I seem to be breaking into a thousand pieces . . . only one human being can put me together again . . . my wife. But she doesn't know her own power. She has no self-confidence. I could be like macaroni in her hands if she only knew. It is hard for us to even talk about our marriage, she starts humbering and I say to myself, here goes the tidal wave again! . . . now, what?" L.P.D.

Of course, L.P.D., you know there are other ways of communicating besides talking to your wife.

Everything you do or do not do around the house or out of it is speaking a language to her. The gifts you bring her, your tone of voice, the way you do not introduce her to acquaintances, your lack of ambition and affection, and so on.

She may be constantly tempted by the thought that you are taking her for granted. But, obviously, you love her, and she must be a remarkable lady, especially if she can turn you into macaroni. I agree with you that "women would get farther with men if they had more self-confidence and if they appeared more often to reason than to their passions of tears."

If you investigate, you will probably see that the secret of her strength power over you is her beauty.

Some women are only first-glance beauties; they are the ones who are beautiful on the outside. This generally amounts to being clean, well-groomed, and pleasing for the moment as is a picture postcard.

Then, there is the second-glance beauty. This one has an extra dimension. It is a beauty of which you never tire. It becomes more fascinating as time goes on.

This beauty does not jump

Pope Praises Sodality Groups

Vatican City (NC)—Pope John XXIII told 3,000 delegates to a convention of the Sodality of Our Lady that "their work is 'best as the world' and a benefit to society everywhere." "To belong to the Sodality of Our Lady," the Pope said, "means to manifest with great devotion one's ties with the world. It means to open one's soul every day to the apostolate. It means to give the good example of purity."

Miami Plans New Seminary

Miami (NC)—Construction of a minor seminary, first in Southeast United States, has been announced by the Diocese of Miami. Expected to be ready for September of this year, the seminary will be located within the Miami city limits on property adjacent to the Christ the Columbus High School for boys in the southwest section of Miami.

New Orders Plan Work In Miami See

Miami (NC)—Major changes in staffs at three of five diocesan high schools and one hospital have been announced by the Diocese of Miami Chancery.

Starting next September, two Religious Communities of Brothers will serve in the diocese for the first time: Brothers of Holy Cross, Province of Austin, Tex., have been assigned to Archbishop Curley High School and Marxist Brothers whose headquarters are at Esopus, N.Y., will staff Christopher Columbus High School. Both boys' schools are located in Miami.

The changes will make several diocesan priests available for full-time parish duties.

Ten Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary from West Chester, Pa., will staff the Notre-Dame Academy for Girls, Sisters of St. Joseph of St. Augustine will augment their staff at Immaculate Academy for Girls in Miami.

On July 1, twelve Sisters of Mercy from Pittsburgh, will assume operation of the Holy Cross Hospital in Fort Lauderdale.

Msgr. James F. Knight, Vicar for Religious, also announced that other communities to be represented in the diocese for the first time next September are Bon Secours Sisters, Baltimore, Md.; Sisters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, Tarzjown, N.Y.; Sisters of St. Joseph, Baden, Pa.; Sisters of St. Francis, Glen Riddle, Pa.



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