

# LOOK OUT BELOW!

By REV. (Lt. Col.) FRANCIS L. SAMSON

To bring you up to date—Father Samson, chaplain of the 101st Division, U.S. Army paratroop corps, chuted into 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 door of the barracks, our Man of Confidence and I listened to the BBC instructions to Allied prisoners of 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 G-2 section of the British Air Force 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 premature attempt at mass break-out, for it would be foolish to lose lives now with assured freedom so close at hand. If the German guards fell, the making officer or noncommissioned officer was 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, as were the Russian symbols for prisoners of war; this was to prevent our attacking planes from mistaking the camp for an enemy garrison.

A large "PW" was to be marked out with stones 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 themselves 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 of battle that might take place near and about the camp.

Allied jets were to be flown above the camp soon as the PW's were notified to prevent it. Each night, as we listened to the radio, the Russian artillery's 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 thousands of leaflets designed to terrify the German civilians which they did very effectively. One of the leaflets simply stated in German, "Rokossovski is your gate!"

As the reputation of Rokossovski's army grew enough to make the German roads were soon jammed with German civilians loaded with the most cherished of family possessions. The occupants were children and old people heading west hoping to escape the Russians and preserving 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 commander, 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 enlisted him into the defense force.

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

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

As a matter of fact, the Russian 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 wild men; with "squeeze-boxes" and hand-saws strapped to their backs, they fired their rifles and tommy-guns in every direction. They looked more like the old Mexican revolutionaries out on a

ral came to the camp. When asked for the ranking American sergeant Lucas brought him to my room. I offered the general a cigar, a couple of boxes of which 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 compliments.

He said that he would send "something good" to me. A Russian soldier brought this "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 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, two and four-wheel trucks, our jeeps, and our armored cars were all almost exclusively theirs. They had their own rocket launchers and rough.

The Russian fighter planes that we saw in this area were all Bell Alacabras, a plane that American pilots considered obsolete and refused to fly. It was the most impossible of handling 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 I had emptied the second pot into his cup.

A political commissar came to the camp, and he immediately called a meeting of 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.

He told us that we would remain in the camp until contact was made with the American lines. He gave us our instructions in Dutch, French, Italian, Polish, and Russian. He said that our countries would be notified immediately that we had been liberated. The Americans (and only the Americans) must 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 the camp was made with the American lines in this sector of Germany.

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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.

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 never in the world I shall ever be cured. 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. Judgment Day. I almost expected to see the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse 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 unless they were in the way and obstructed traffic. 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 and as he stopped by each body to say a prayer, he seemed to me at the time as a sort of symbol of the Church in a devastated world.

We finally arrived at the church rectory and went in. The house had been partially destroyed by fire and was completely wrecked inside. The priest's two elderly brothers and his mother and father had come to him for protection.

The priest and his father were sitting on the steps, apparently in a state of extreme shock. The women were huddled together on a couch. One of the sisters spoke to the French priest and told him that the three women had been violated by a group of Russian soldiers while their brother and father had been forced to watch.

The French priest asked them if there was anything he could do, though I doubted whether there was anything anyone was able to do. They shook their heads.

I judged that they were on the verge of losing their minds; they were certainly beyond words and beyond receiving any expressions of sympathy. A rose hung loosely from the fingers of the old woman. As she sat there with her eyes closed, I couldn't be sure that she was alive.

We took a different route back to the camp, and we spoke very little on the way. As we were coming up the hill, we passed a wagon that had been overturned; it was one of those in which a German family had tried to get away from the Russians.

The family had been killed, as was evidenced by the fresh dirt covering a part of the ditch by the wagon. I would say that there were five or six buried there. Someone had at least given them the last of the corporal works of mercy—burial.

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.

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## Making Marriage Click

### Second-Glance Beauty

By MRS. 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. It is hard for me to talk about my wife, she is so high on my mind. I say to myself: here goes the tidal wave again . . . now, what?"

Of course, I.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 glances you do not bring her, your tone of voice, the way you do not introduce her to acquaintances, your lack of ambition and self-esteem, 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 knows it. It is a remarkable thing, especially if she can turn you into a mace. 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 Niagara of tears.

If you investigate, you will probably be sure that the secret of her strange 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-dressed, 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



COURIER-JOURNAL  
Friday, June 5, 1959

## 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.

Starting next September, two diocesan seminaries, St. Augustine's and St. Joseph's, 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 Bishop's Brothers, whose headquarters are at Espinas, 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 Forest Lauderdale.

Mrs. James F. Enright, 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 Retreat in the Convent, Mt. Kisco, N.Y.; Religious of the Sacred Heart, Barrytown, N.Y.; Sisters of St. Joseph, Bredon, Pa.; Sisters of St. Francis, Glen Riddle, Pa.



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FRIDAY, JUN 5

**Ithacans Knights'**

Ithaca (NC)—The Ithaca Council of the Knights of Columbus, through the secretary, May 28, announced that the Ithaca Council will participate in the annual convention of the Knights of Columbus, which will be held in Miami, Fla., from June 10 to 14.

**Monks In Daily**

The New York Times reported that the monks of the Transmontani Monks, who were awarded the Pulitzer Prize for their book, "The Monks of Transmontani," will be in Miami for the annual convention of the Knights of Columbus.

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