
The Newletters: E. Gail Carpenter Describes Life on the Home Front Part I

edited by Charles William Sloan, Jr.

IT WAS MARCH 1942. Three months earlier, the United States had entered the Second World War. At that time, E. Gail Carpenter, a petroleum geologist, was teaching the hundred-plus members of the Newell Sunday church school class in Wichita's First Presbyterian Church. The class, founded in 1934 and named after the Rev. George Edwards Newell, the church's pastor from 1929 until his death in 1933, was composed of single young adults. Soon fifty-eight class members were serving in the armed forces. And so to give these folk "a little window on Wichita," Carpenter began a monthly series of letters which would continue until war's end in August 1945 and comprise 126 typewritten pages.¹

Gail Carpenter was born June 9, 1903, in Butler County, Pennsylvania, the son of M. A. and Eva Snow Carpenter. Both his father and grandfather had been in the oil business. He attended common school in Butler County and high school in Grove City, Pennsylvania. He was graduated from the College of Wooster, Ohio, in 1925, and in 1926 he received his master's degree from the University of Pittsburgh.

That same year, Carpenter married Jean Warren, whom he had met in college, and attended the convention of the American Association of Petroleum Geolo-

gists in Dallas in search of employment. There he was offered a job in Tulsa with the Skelly Oil Company. Carpenter still remembers stepping off the train in Tulsa: "It was 7:00 a.m. The temperature was 104 degrees. The man who had hired me had been fired, and I had no job."

Carpenter was soon working for the Sinclair Oil and Gas Company, and in 1929 he moved to Wichita to work for the Wichita Independent Oil and Gas Company, which was taken over later by the Phillips Petroleum Company. On March 4, 1929, he and Jean joined First Presbyterian Church.

Carpenter, unlike many geologists in those heady days of Kansas oil exploration, was a quiet, "puritanical intellectual" who was not particularly happy working for a large company. While he enjoyed studying the contour maps to determine where oil might be present, he longed to test his conclusions on his own in the field.² His opportunity came in 1935 when he formed a partnership with Earl G. Lay, a fellow member of First Presbyterian Church. The gamble paid off with the discovery of the Bemis pool in Ellis County, one of the more significant finds in the history of western Kansas petroleum.

It was during the height of the dust storms. "We stayed in a little hotel not to excite the oil industry—though they wouldn't have been. Sometimes we couldn't see across the street," Carpenter says. The spot he had chosen was owned by a prosperous farmer named Fred Bemis; and even though he had no previous experience in taking oil leases, Carpenter remem-

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1. The editor first read these letters while serving on the archives committee of First Presbyterian Church. He wishes to acknowledge the assistance of countless alumni of the Newell Class in locating the many people mentioned in the letters; and of Edward P. Lyon; Harry Williford; Donald C. Ashe; Albert L. Witherspoon, the second archivist of First Presbyterian Church; William Ellington, Wichita Public Library historian; and Gail Carpenter himself.

2. For quote see Craig Miner, *Discovery! Cycles of Change in the Kansas Oil & Gas Industry 1860-1987* (Wichita: Kansas Independent Oil and Gas Association, 1987), 219. Miner, also a member of First Presbyterian Church, shared his conclusions about Carpenter in a conversation with the editor.

bers that he "sat in Bemis' kitchen and wrote 5000 acres in leases—the major part of the pool.... All of those leases stood up," he proudly recalls. After the Bemis pool, he discovered the smaller Solomon pool, also in Ellis County.

No doubt it is the intellectual aspect of Carpenter's personality that accounts for his interest in writing and history. "I've always liked to write," he says. "When Ellen McComb³ wanted something written—when a pastor would leave, for example—she'd call on me."

When the church marked its centennial in 1970, Carpenter was named chairman of the celebration. Many items were contributed for a historical display. He was concerned about their dispersion.

I [Carpenter] went to a session⁴ meeting all wound up one night and made a big speech about these objects being too valuable to be lost, and asked what we should do with them. Somebody promptly moved that I be named church archivist. This was quickly approved with great "ha-ha-ha-ha!" There was no space, no money, no nothin'. Then Don Schroeder⁵ secured a room... in the Case Memorial Building. I brought files and steel shelves from the attic at home, and thus began the archives.⁶

In his fourteen years as church archivist, Carpenter's research interests ranged from the abandoned military dugout of 1869 in which Presbyterian worship services were first held in Wichita, to the mission churches established by First Presbyterian Church, to the activities of the Rev. Timothy Hill who, as Superintendent of Home Missions for the Southwest, covered early Kansas seeking out locations for churches. Research on Hill has taken Carpenter to the British Museum in London.

The "Newelletters" which follow are worth reading if for no other reason than because Carpenter is a good writer. He writes lovingly on the Kansas landscape:

This week is the beginning of harvest in these parts. Yesterday evening as we were driving through this country near sundown it seemed to me that there was everywhere a beauty which is peculiar in Kansas. There were the broad rolling acres of golden ripe wheat. Here and there was a patch of green with fat cattle grazing. The streams were marked by the winding irregular rows of cottonwoods. The farm houses sprinkled over the landscape looked neat and comfortable. The clouds were white and fleecy overhead and the sun about to set

3. Ellen McComb was church secretary from 1924-1967.

4. The session, composed of elders, is the ruling body of a congregation in the Presbyterian Church.

5. The Rev. Donald B. Schroeder has been minister of education in First Presbyterian Church since 1971.

6. *First Presby News*, May 29, 1987.



During the Second World War, E. Gail Carpenter recorded life on the home front in Wichita.

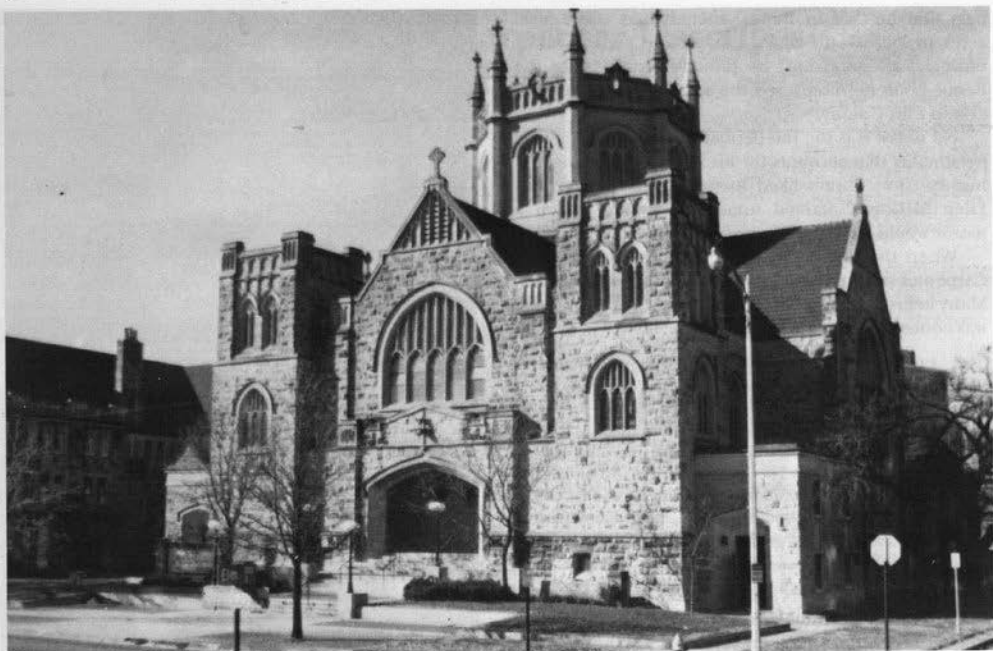
was beginning to paint a border to the firmament using all of the delicate colors on mother nature's palette.

He captures the moods of the seasons:

It is the middle of an unusually fine Kansas July. Each day the sun chases the red stuff in the thermometers close to the century mark and each night the cool winds bring it down again until in the early morning we begin to reach for a cover.

And a sense of humor is always present, as in the conclusion of a poem on wartime shortages:

In the opinion of many thoughtful civilians, the longest shortage of all
Is the one, yards and yards of which are missing from
the bathroom wall.
How we miss you,
Soft Northern Tissue!



First Presbyterian Church, Wichita

The letters also say much about the character of Carpenter himself. Much writing from the Second World War is vituperative towards the Germans and Japanese. And certainly there were those who saw Americans as immaculate paragons of virtue. Carpenter, on the other hand, dug deeply to the roots of Reformed theology and its emphasis on the selfish and self-centered quality in all people, or to use the theological words, the sinful nature of man. In a prayer, he writes

We say that we are perplexed—and yet, in our hearts, we are not perplexed. We have sinned. And like Cain of old we cannot hide from Thee. We have sinned in that we have not learned to live in peace. We are ashamed when we survey the material and spiritual resources which Thou has placed in our hands for the good of all mankind. Yes, we are ashamed when we behold how we have misused Thy bounties, even for our own destruction....

The most important reason for printing these letters here, however, is that they provide glimpses into the transformation of Wichita from a depression-weary city

into a booming center of aircraft production.⁷ Carpenter has a keen eye for the details: the airplanes overhead that were not there before; the new construction; the crowded buses and shops; the shortage of consumer goods; the women workers; the feelings that accompany the news that a serviceman is dead; the emotions displayed on D-Day, V-E Day, and V-J Day. "The only thing I had in mind was to provide a little window on Wichita once a month," says Carpenter. "These letters were not written as historical documents." But that is what they have become: a delightful, sometimes moving, history of everyday life in Kansas during the greatest war in the history of the world.

7. The letters are printed here as Carpenter wrote them, rather than making them conform to usage set down in the latest edition of the *Chicago Manual of Style*. Carpenter sometimes capitalized words normally not capitalized. Also, he sometimes used variations in the spellings of foreign place-names; however, this was not uncommon at the time these places first entered the American consciousness.

NEWELLETTER NUMBER ONE

March, 1942

Dear Soldier:

The calendar says that Spring will be in Wichita next week end. There are, however, certain signs that Mother Nature is speeding things up this year, for the men in the neighborhood were out in their shirt sleeves with bare heads trimming their shrubs and digging in their flower beds today. We went for a long walk after supper with the children⁸ leading the way on their bikes. As we came home a robin perched on the highest part of Wallingford's⁹ roof proclaimed to the world, "Spring is here. The calendar be hanged," or music to that effect.

This is the most unusual letter that I have ever written. I have talked to you all at some time over the past few years in the very commonplace atmosphere of a Sunday School class. Now you are so many that I must address you as "Soldiers" and I cannot even guess where you may be when you read these words. This letter has been taking form for a long time. You would be surprised to know to what trouble I will go to avoid writing a letter. But here it is, Saturday—the third Saturday in the month at that. Tomorrow is my Sunday off. Maybe some fighting man in some corner of the world would like a letter from the "Old Perfessor." What excuse have I for not writing? None at all. So we will go back to one day before Spring actually arrived.

It was the early part of last week that I took a little business trip to Ponca City and Enid [both in Oklahoma] and then back to Wichita. It has occurred to me since, that there were a few things about the trip which reflect dimly the times in which we live—and perhaps the conduct and the attitudes of the folks back home.

In the first place, trips of any kind are less frequent than they used to be. A few months ago it was not unusual to find half a dozen representatives of an oil company watching a single well, each man in his own car. Now all six pile into one car. And when business takes one to Ponca City, it is arranged that there is business also in Arkansas City and Enid. We must kill as many birds as possible with one set of tires. And now, we have one for the Quiz Kids. How is it possible for me to be driving to Ponca City and for my own car at the same time to be parked in its usual place in my garage? The answer to that one is, that as long as the Auto Rental Service cars have tires, we drive their cars.

8. The Carpenters' children are Mary Ann Nolen (1930-), now of Tulsa, Oklahoma, and Don G. (1934-), a geologist in Jackson, Wyoming.

9. Carpenter's readers would have known that this is a reference to Samuel P. Wallingford, who was a prominent grain dealer and member of First Presbyterian Church.

We have used rental cars in our business from time to time, even before Pearl Harbor. They have always supplied us with Fords in good condition. Their cars are still in fair shape, but there are a few surprise features. The tires are all branded with the brand of the Auto Rental Company in exactly the same manner that cattle are branded. Each car is equipped with a governor which permits one to drive at a top speed of fifty-eight miles per hour. The radio won't work because they can't get repair men for radios. The engine has a new ping, which a few months ago would not have been tolerated. The ping simply means that they have taken some of the lead out of the gas. There ought to be some sort of pun about the engine that knocked every time they took Ethyl out.

When one drives out of town, it is always a good chance to take care of some of the Sunday Afternoon Superintending which we did only a few Sundays ago at the airplane factories. We go by Boeing to see how nearly completed the new plant is, or to see what changes are being made at the Airport, or how the new highway which will soon carry us a half mile west of the Boeing plant, is progressing.¹⁰ You would naturally suppose that even before you get out of the city limits with that governor on the car there would be a continuous stream of cars giving you their dust. It just isn't done.

There is little of the good old-fashioned speeding because the other fellow is saving his car and his rubber too. It is rather interesting to have the police department report that our attempt to conserve rubber has actually conserved human life. There are fewer accidents since Pearl Harbor.

As one approaches Ponca City there is a new sound in the air. A training school for British flyers is in full swing. The flying field is so situated that when the boys take off into the prevailing wind they gain part of their altitude over one corner of the town and I suppose that they fly over the rest of the town just because. Since

10. Today the Boeing Military Airplane Company in Wichita, with over 10 million-square feet of floor space, is the largest single manufacturing plant in the United States. The original Boeing facility, Plant I, contained only 230,000-square feet at the beginning of the war. Obviously, much more space was needed for war production. In 1941-1942 the federal government built Plant II containing 3,297,366-square feet, at a cost of \$27 million. It is to this plant that Carpenter refers. Plant II was purchased from the government by Boeing in 1979 for \$45 million as part of a \$1 billion expansion and modernization of the Wichita facility.

In 1942 the municipal airport was located directly east of the Boeing plant and new wings were being constructed onto the terminal building. In 1951 the Air Force took over the facility creating McConnell Air Force Base, and the municipal airport moved to its current location west of the city.

The highway referred to is K15 (Southeast Boulevard).

flyers must be taught to fly at night too, the Ponca City folks have learned to go to sleep to the noisome music of the propellers.

Even a business conference requires a new language. In addition to the ordinary problems of finding more oil, there is the question of whether it is being done according to the rules of Uncle Sam. And there are times when it is just a little bit difficult to know just where a well can be drilled or just what material is available for any well.

Lunch is the same old bowl of soup and pie and coffee, except the coffee. In Ponca City they used a little different sweetening system. The sugar bowls were gone, of course. With each cup of coffee there came a little paper bag with one teaspoon of sugar in it. At Dockum's¹¹ they simply say, "With or without?" and no matter what you say, it comes almost without.

Just outside of Ponca City there appeared by the side of the road a new kind of hitchhiker—two boys in the

11. Dockum's was for several decades Wichita's leading chain of drugstores. Carpenter's office was located in the then Union National Bank Building at Broadway and Douglas. There was a Dockum's on the ground floor where he could take a coffee break.

uniform of British student flyers. I picked them up. They were lads from London who had been in this country five weeks. Those of their squadron who had been thrifty or lucky, or both, were using a short furlough to go to the Grand Canyon. My passengers were broke and bumming their way to Oklahoma City. As I listened closely to catch every word of the King's English I was reminded that these are strange, troubled days in London, in Cairo, in Sidney, in Hawaii, and in Wichita.

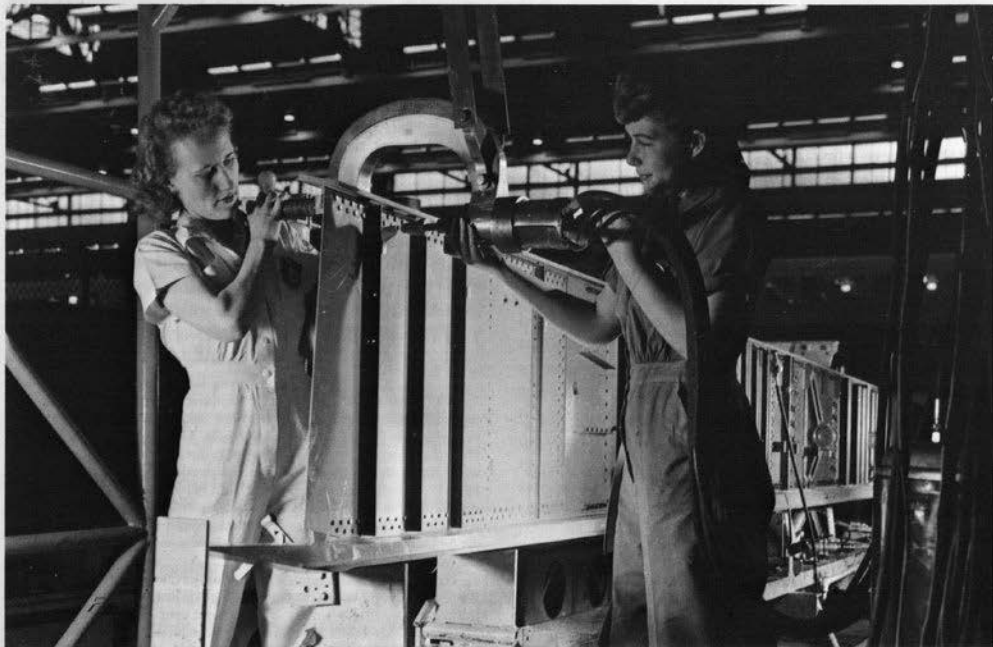
These are great times for men of great faith. We, who are still at home have seen your faith and your courage in the job which you are doing so nobly. The little inconveniences which I have described are such trifles and yet they are the evidence of the fact that we have a part in this job too. Together may we speedily get the job done.

NEWLETTER NUMBER TWO

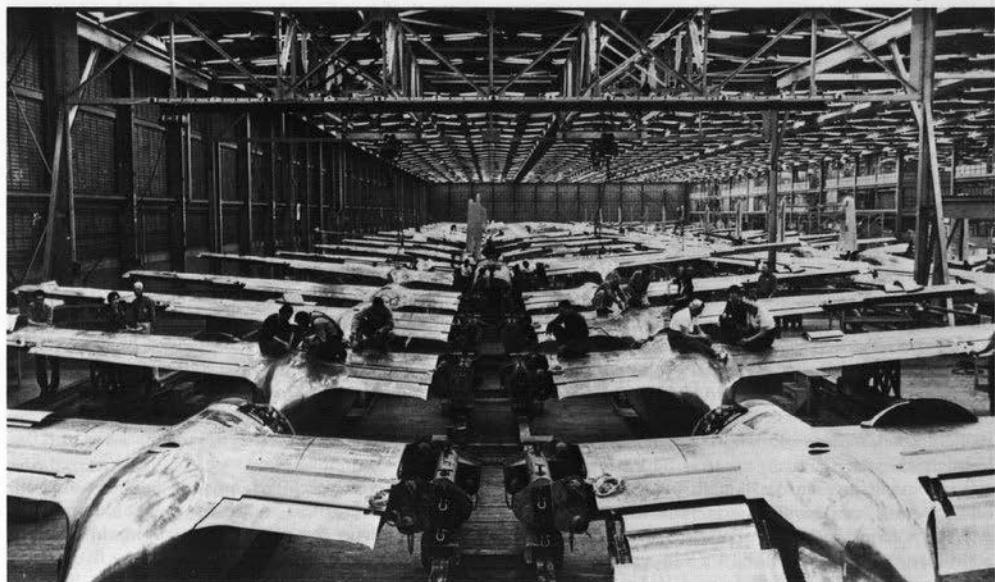
April, 1942

Dear Gang:

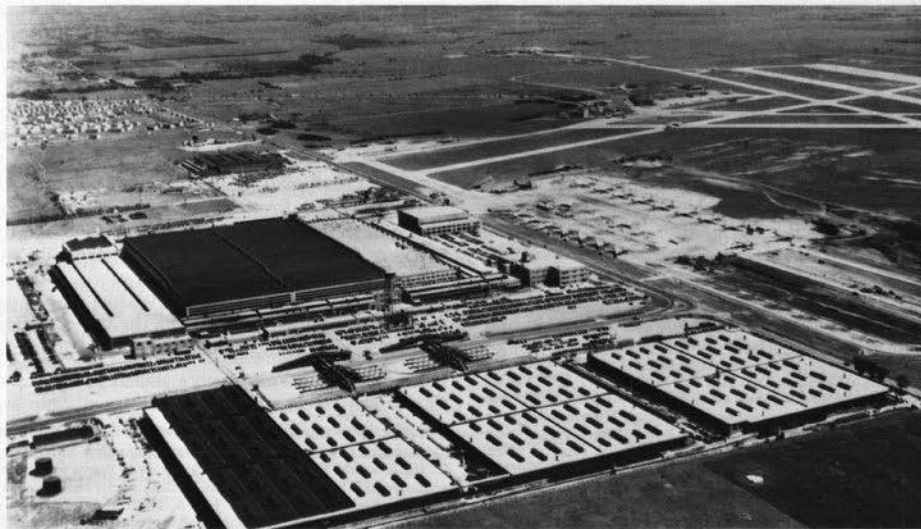
This letter must begin with a word of appreciation for the very interesting letters which came in response



By war's end, women made up most of the work force in Wichita's aviation industry.



Wing and nacelle assemblies, completed by Beech Aircraft Corporation in Wichita, were used for the Douglas A-26 Invader attack bomber.



Boeing Plant I was supplemented in 1941-1942 by the construction of Plant II. In this photograph taken after construction was completed, Boeing warehouses can be seen in the immediate foreground; Plant II is directly behind the warehouses; and Plant I is to the rear of Plant II. Nearby was the municipal airport (top, right) and Plainview, one of the new housing projects built for workers (top, left).

to my initial effort.¹² They were all the more appreciated because they were not expected. It is no secret that you are busy men these days, and while it is quite a thrill to receive letters from everywhere about so many interesting places and things, please do not feel that a reply is necessary. If these letters bring a moment's pleasure to any of you, nothing more is required.

Perhaps you would be interested to know to whom these letters are being sent. They go to the members of the Newell Class who are in the Service and to at least a part of another grand group of fellows who were in the Young Peoples Department when I was connected with it several years ago. The list at the present writing includes - Slayton Ermev, Jack King, Bill Miller, Bob Richey, Bob Tanner, Otto Winterhalter, Bruce McVey, and Dick Clausing from the Young Peoples Department, and Dave Moore, Floyd Roby, Carl Wriston, John Reedy, Sid Lawson, Wayne Holcomb, John Vosburgh, Bob Williams, Dick Wellman, Roland Toeves, and Bill Mierau from the Newell Class. As soon as addresses can be secured it will include Al Daniels, Joe Schriener and Eddie Dorsett, and it will soon include Walt Trombold and Bill Chapman.¹³ One of the biggest problems is addresses - What addresses!

12. Carpenter saved the letters he received from the men in service. These letters are in the archives of First Presbyterian Church.

13. The following servicemen returned to Wichita after the war and either are members of First Presbyterian Church or were members at the time of their deaths. Jack King (1917-) is retired from Kansas Gas and Electric Company. Bill Miller (1916-1984) was associate professor of logopedics at Wichita State University. Bob Tanner (1920-) is retired from L and S Machine Company. Dick Clausing (1918-) is a retired attorney. Floyd Roby (1914-) is a retired accountant. Bill Mierau (1919-) owns a construction company. Eddie Dorsett (1911-1985) was retired from National Cash Register. Walt Trombold (1910-) is retired from Reid Supply Company. Bill Chapman (1910-1986) was retired from Cessna Aircraft Company.

The following men left either Wichita or First Presbyterian Church after the war. Slayton Ermev (1919-) is a petroleum lead man in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Bob Richey (1919-) is an upholsterer and retired dramatics instructor at Phillips University, Enid, Oklahoma. Otto Winterhalter (1915-1980) was a bookkeeper at Wichita State University. Bruce McVey (1917-) is retired from Gas Service Company in Newton. Dave Moore (1914-) is retired director of food service for the University of Utah, Salt Lake City. Carl Wriston (1917-1972) was an electrical engineer in Columbus, Ohio. John Reedy (1907-1958?) was an accountant in Lake Charles, Louisiana. Wayne Holcomb (1915-) is a retired plumber in Chester, Virginia. Bob Williams (1912-) is a retired geologist in soil and water conservation in Chanutte. Dick Wellman (1917-) is retired from Marsh and McClennon in Oak Park, Illinois. Roland Toeves (1910-) is retired from Derby Refining Company in Magnolia, Arkansas. Joe Schriener (1910-1977) was retired from Mobil Oil Corporation in Dallas, Texas.

John Vosburgh (1911-1944) was killed in action in Italy. Al Daniels, while on leave in St. Louis, Missouri, was apparently the victim of foul play while riding on a riverboat; the police believe he was robbed and thrown overboard.

No information was found on the whereabouts of Sid Lawson.

On the home front these are the days when you start off by donning your light suit and as you leave the house you put on your top coat and grab an umbrella. You soon get too warm so you take off your top coat and then it starts to rain, but before you can raise your umbrella the rain has changed to snow. Then the wind turns your umbrella inside out and blows the clouds away so that the sun comes out again and off comes your top coat and you do it all over again. Such weather never seems to discourage the Jonquils, so as usual they opened the flowering season in Wichita. All over town there are lavender splotches of blooming redbud, and the elm trees have leaves half an inch long. The tulips are commencing to bloom and the Pittsburgh Pirates and the Philadelphia Athletics played two exhibition games here last week end. It was not necessary for me to go because there are at least two baseball games in progress in our front yard every evening. Unfortunately, my tulip bed is being used as the pitcher's box and the dining room window is first base.

If you were in Wichita today you would be riding the bus with the rest of us and unless you could persuade some old lady to give you her seat you would stand up and like it. It used to be that we stood on the five o'clock bus until it got between East High and Hillside. Now the bus is still full when we reach Roosevelt.¹⁴ Each day I notice that a good share of the women on the buses are dressed in coveralls with an identification tag and a Cessna, Beech, or Boeing insignia very much in evidence. The checkered cabs are being driven by women, who are all dolled up in snappy uniforms.¹⁵

There will be no more Circuses in Mathewson's Pasture. The place is simply covered with nice new brick apartment houses. A little old carnival tried to squeeze into half a block with the produce market last week but it seemed to lack for space. As much as we shall miss searching in the straw for stray nickels after the Circus had gone, I am sure that the new apartments are much more appropriate to that location.¹⁶

The big political argument in Wichita now is water. Shall we renew the franchise with the Water Company or shall we buy them out and enjoy the benefits and the

14. In other words, instead of standing for almost two miles, Carpenter was now standing for two-and-a-half miles.

15. It would be interesting to know how many women were employed in Wichita during the war. Unfortunately, no one kept such statistics. Early in the war, on July 5, 1942, it was reported that twenty-five percent of Cessna Aircraft workers were women. That percentage no doubt grew as the war lengthened. By war's end, eighty percent of the riveters at Beech Aircraft were women.

16. Mathewson's Pasture was located in the 1400-1600 block of East Central. The produce market was located in the 1100 block of East Central.

disadvantages of a municipally owned water system? The Commission has voted three to two for ownership. The people have not spoken. In any event the whole community will be in quite a lather before the question is finally settled.¹⁷

Being allergic to manual labor I have had a man by the name of Joe, who has, up until now, done some of my yard work. Joe has had a crew of good helpers and Uncle Sam has asked them to help him, so Joe says he cannot help me. I have been drafted for yard work and so far there have been only two attractive features about yard work. It can be done sitting down and there is lots of time to think. My yard has become a little U.S.A. My big trouble just now is with the little yellow devils¹⁸ which so much resemble the rising sun. I no more than get one dandelion bayoneted until two others bloom behind me. I didn't know until now how many enemies are attacking my lawn. Weeds spring up from no seed at all, crab grass sprouts in bunches, the ground is hard and barren in spots, the dogs, the newsboys and the mailmen are determined to stomp it out. Joe is a good yard man but I have a hunch that we are both better off, me and my lawn, without him.

NEWELLETTER NUMBER THREE

May, 1942

Dear Gang:

Now for a glance or two at the Home Front. The School Teachers have finally had their inning. For years and years they have just been dying to know certain things about Mrs. John Doe: Is that the natural color of her hair? How much do you suppose she weighs? And above all, how old is she? All of these questions were answered the other day when Mrs. Doe applied for her sugar ration card. One editor has estimated that never before in history have so many lies been told in such a short period of time.

The family sedan has now become the great American problem child. Time was when a flat tire was something that a young fellow got stuck with for the evening. Now it is a tragedy of the first degree. In passing a fellow traveler who is weeping over his flat, it is now proper to assume a mournful expression and remove one's hat. And now too, comes the problem of rationed gas. It will soon be quite the thing for the family to assemble promptly at three each Sunday afternoon for its weekly joy ride around the block.

17. The city did not take over the water company until 1957.

18. While the "little yellow devils" were of course dandelions, Carpenter, looking back over the years, states that he regrets having used this metaphor which is disparaging towards the Japanese.

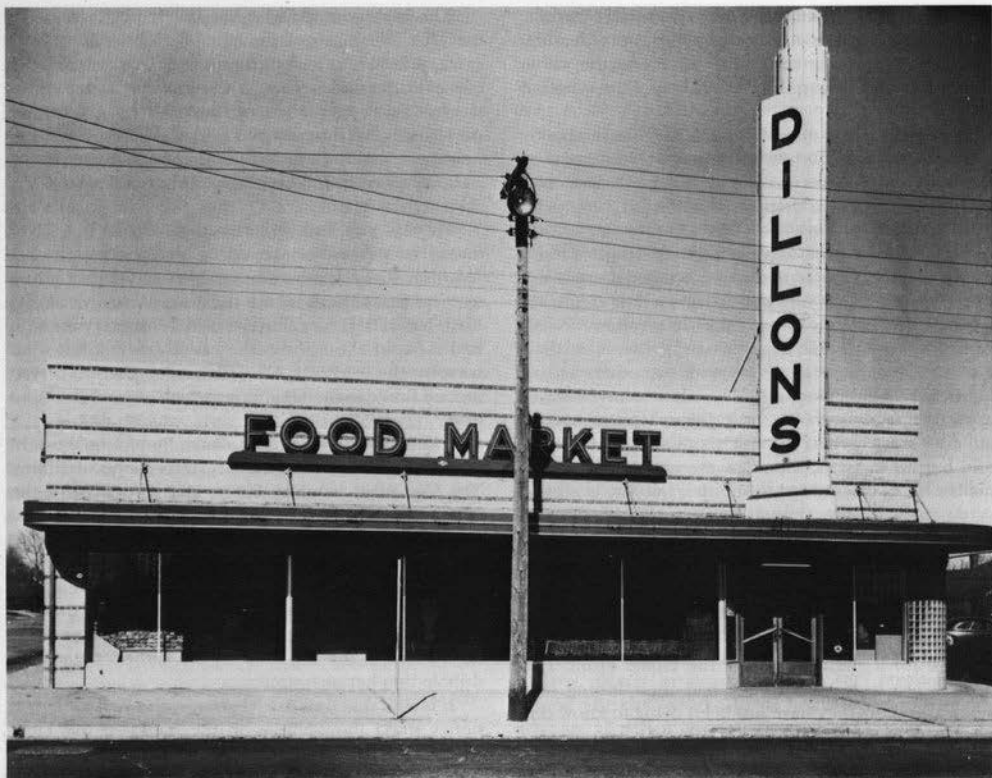
The high cost of living has finally begun to make itself felt. The movies have upped their price from forty cents, plus tax, to four bits, plus tax. That free second cup of coffee has become a thing of the past, and instead of Dr. Pepper at ten, two and four, it is Dr. Pepper on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. And do you know how many months it takes to save enough sugar to bake a chocolate cake? If it ever happens here I'll make it the subject for a letter.

Perhaps you had forgotten that Wichita is a River town. The papers keep reporting high water in the Big Arkansas River. It is barely possible that they are giving us the facts without telling the story. Actually the Big River has at last come into her own. Most everyone who had thought about the matter at all has felt just a bit sorry for the Big River. All of these years she has played second fiddle to the Little River which after all, is only a drip.

These two streams have almost human qualities in that they seem to have such very different personalities. The Big River winding like a lazy serpent thru the countryside, is never excited by the local showers. She scarcely seems to care whether water flows or not. But the Little River, like a frightened rabbit, scurries from place to place and even a little shower causes her to leap clear out of her banks. It is surprising to see that the giddy antics of the Little River never so much as ruffle the surface of the Big River as she gathers the stormy dribble into her own stream.

It is said that one day, years ago, the Park Commissioner stood thoughtfully on the banks of the Little River. When he had gone the cocky little stream boasted to the placid Big River, "I'll be damned if the Park Board can make anything out of me!" And they did. They stopped her mouth with jaws of iron and concrete and now our parks flourish on her banks and people passing by, "Oh" and "Ah" over the beautiful Little River and not one word of praise is ever wasted upon the Big River.

The Big River has bided her time. She has gathered the waters from the melting snows of Colorado and the rains from Western Kansas, and little by little, without any fuss, she has asserted herself. She has covered the dry sands of her wide bottom with muddy water; she has hidden the little islands which studded her channel; she has climbed the cottonwood trees on her banks; she has lapped hungrily at the footpaths on the tops of the old dykes; and she presses against the footings of the bridges until they groan and threaten to give way. Now at last, the Big River is being noticed; several hundred men stand guard day and night as she flows by. Even the newspapers have admitted that there is a Big River and perhaps after all, there is some justice in the fact



For Carpenter, a visible sign of Wichita's growth was the opening of "Dillon's Super-Super-Super Market" at Oliver and Douglas with 8,000-square feet of floor space.

that for a short time the Little River utterly deflated, with her mouth wide open, just trickles into the broad flood.¹⁹

19. Wichitans refer to the Arkansas River as the Big River and to the Little Arkansas River as the Little River. The Little River empties into the Big River just northwest of downtown Wichita. In 1910 the Little River, normally a shallow stream, was dammed up north of Central Avenue, and over the succeeding decades its banks were landscaped. By the Second World War, it was an attractive river winding its way through city parks and the prestigious Riverside residential area. On the other hand, little had been done to improve the appearance of the Big River except for the removal of some islands. (Indeed, it was not until the 1960s and 1970s that the Big River's banks were landscaped and a dam was built to keep it full of water as it passes through the city's heart.)

Carpenter here refers to the fact that heavy rains in southeastern Colorado and central Kansas were causing the Big River to leave its

NEWLETTER NUMBER FOUR

June, 1942

Dear Gang:

Your letters from hither and yon are filled with expressions which speak better and louder than any military report of the wonderfully fine Spirit of the

banks in Dodge City and other parts of western Kansas and were threatening Hutchinson and areas north of Wichita. The Big River was not in the habit of flooding Wichita, and it did not do so on this occasion. Rather, it was the Little River and Chisholm Creek that regularly left their banks as they passed through Wichita.

This problem was not solved until 1958 when, at the cost of \$20 million, the Army Corps of Engineers completed the Wichita-Valley Center Flood Control Project. Through a system of gates and channels, excess water from the rivers and creek is detoured around the west side of Wichita before entering the Big River south of the city.

Nation's Fighting Men and of the splendid manner in which you, who only a few weeks and months ago were young business men, are taking to the job at hand. You are entitled to a picture of the Spirit of the Home Front. There are a few who have voiced an opinion that John Q. Citizen is not very much concerned about this war. It has even been hinted that some of the home folks are like Artemus Ward, who in Civil War days, wrote, "I have already given two cousins to the war, and I stand redly to sacrifice my wife's brother ruther'n not see the rebelyin krusht."

There are unmistakable signs that your home folks are making this quarrel with the Axis Partners in Europe and in the Pacific a very personal matter. Some of your friends, who, when you left, were operating profitable business ventures, have closed their doors and for the duration have taken jobs at the airplane factories. Automobile showrooms are no longer filled with shining new models. In some instances the stock of spare parts has been moved into the showroom to make room for lathes and drillpresses in the back shop where parts are being turned out for bombers. Butts' big Oldsmobile showroom on East Douglas now houses the Government Employment Office. A dozen new shops have sprung up on Douglas and other streets—all making parts for planes. There are new shops in all of the little neighboring towns and all of them are producing for some part of the war effort.

Since we are not yet "on the alert" it is at night that Wichita really shines. There is a glow about the airplane factories which can be seen from Berlin and Tokyo and which simply means to us that thousands of men and women are busy twenty-four hours each day building planes and more planes faster and faster. The kids proudly save their nickels and dimes for War Saving Stamps. The War Bond windows at the Banks have customers standing in line every day. Rubber piles grow at the filling stations as John Q. gives up his last pair of suspenders. The men, who are leaving each week for the Service are a little older and they have a few less teeth, but they have that same well known determination to get the job done thoroughly and quickly. The older men are constantly looking for their proper place so that they too, may strike an effective blow. If there are those who are careless about doing their part they most certainly are not among your home folks.

The visiting before and after class on Sunday morning has to do mostly with who is where and what soldier has a new address - Yes, and at the Session meetings these days we call you by name and exchange news about you. Our Prayers for you are not less earnest and sincere because they are less beautiful than the Soldier's

prayer which closed Henry Morton Robinson's Litany for a New A.E.F. [American Expeditionary Force]:

God of the hidden purpose,
Let our embarking be
The prayer of proud men asking
Not to be safe, but free.

NEWELLETTER NUMBER FIVE

July, 1942

Dear Gang:

It is the middle of an unusually fine Kansas July. Each day the sun chases the red stuff in the thermometers close to the century mark and each night the cool winds bring it down again until in the early morning we begin to reach for a cover. The wheat harvest is well past its peak and those who know about such things tell us that the harvest is good, especially in Western Kansas where the elevators and the available wheat cars will not hold the grain. The tomato plants which we planted several weeks ago where our roses should have grown, have commenced to produce nice red tomatoes for our table. The neighborhood children are too much in the sun and at night they reveal a narrow white band about the middle of their bronzed bodies, which shows very plainly where their trunks have been. The Municipal Pool is doing a big business and the Kansas Semi-Pro Baseball Tournament is in full swing with ten teams still undefeated.

Twenty-five new buses have been put into service in Wichita, six on the regular City Routes and the rest on the Airplane Factory Routes. The new buses have no chromium trim. The seat rails are painted and the hand rails are of stainless steel, which stains readily. Bicycle parking racks are beginning to be seen in front of sub-contracting shops and downtown department stores. The Wichita Beacon has added Blondie to its comic strips and the Eagle has added Major Hoople and Out Our Way. Many of our younger Medics, including [Charles] Rombold, [Bruce] Meeker, and [Willard] Kaiser, have been called to the Army with other leading citizens, including Paul White and Frank Barr.²⁰

The airplane factories here are taking an important part in the tremendous Army glider program which is evidently not a military secret. We are expecting to see

20. Carpenter included this bit of information because he read it in the newspaper and thought his readers would recognize the names. Paul White and Frank Barr were attorneys. Barr was president of the Wichita Chamber of Commerce in 1941 and later served as regional post office director and assistant postmaster general. Paul White was president of the Wichita Chamber of Commerce in 1950.

lots of transport gliders in the air here soon.²¹ The main program of plane production is, of course, not being sidetracked in any way. Arch Booth²² made the statement last week that it is known for certain that there will be an additional seventy thousand added to the present population of Wichita within the next year.²³ The first places to show the effects of an increased population and demand upon labor are the cafes and restaurants. You take what they bring you when they get it to you and are happy to get it. Wichita sweats from her labors this July of 1942.

NEWELLETTER NUMBER SIX

August, 1942

Dear Gang:

Since August is normally Vacation Season for most people, this letter may have a slight vacation flavor.

In the past there has always been the problem of whether to go to Colorado, New Mexico, or California. This year there is no problem. The popular vacation spot is the back yard. One of the pleasant features of this particular homemade vacation is that it includes a rest from the preparation of lessons for the Newell Class during the five Sundays of August. It has also been a much needed and very welcome change of diet for the Class. As might be expected, a Saturday afternoon with no lesson to prepare, becomes a grand opportunity for getting into trouble, and the most convenient spot for trouble has been the Meadow Lark Golf Course.²⁴

The brand of golf which I play is the result of playing regularly. For the past five or six years I have played on Decoration Day, Fourth of July, and Labor Day. This business of upsetting my schedule has also upset my game. Last Saturday, while adding my score and trying to explain away several bad holes, there came to mind a few little side lights upon Wichita which are noticeable while vacationing at home.

Ordinarily, in going from 240 No. Pinecrest to Meadow Lark, one simply heads south on Oliver as far

as Harry Street, turns west, and there it is. For awhile at least, the most direct route is longer and more interesting. There is, for instance, the new shopping center at Oliver and Douglas, which just now is one of the most popular places in town—not because of the new Telephone Exchange Building, the Safeway Store, Kroeger's Market, Dillon's Super-Super-Super Market,²⁵ nor Doc-kum's new drug store, but because of Ethan's new Curb Service Fountain. The sodas may be ordinary sodas, but it is the service which packs 'em in. They have a whole flock of girl Car Hops, dressed in bright yellow bras, well tanned birthday pink midriffs, and very short yellow skirts. It is said the ice cream melts before it reaches the car.

On Oliver at Kellogg there is a barricade which closes Oliver to the south and a detour sign which sends the traffic west on Kellogg. Oliver is being widened to take care of the increased traffic to and from Boeing, Cessna, the Airport and Hill Top Manor. One cannot help being impressed by the fine new fire station at Kellogg and Delrose, and the brand new buff brick grade school in the 600 block on South Pershing. The detour sign points south on Broadview which now goes through to Harry Street. To one accustomed to Wichita of the '30's it is quite a shock to find that South Broadview passes on the west side of Hill Top Manor, which is now a town of 6000 people. All of the housing units which are finished are occupied—demountable units are being built as rapidly as possible.²⁶

As Hill Top Manor is just across the street from the Meadow Lark Golf Course, we are back once more to the game of golf. Today there is a slightly new emphasis to the game, which reminds one of all the stories about the Scotchman and his ball. There are a few old fashioned players who talk about par for each hole and par for the course, but the main objective of the game now seems to be to play a ball for the greatest number of holes without cutting the cover or losing it.

25. How time changes our conception of what is big! "Dillon's Super-Super-Super Market" (now the location of Barrier's Jewelers) contained 8,000-square feet of floor space. Dillon's newest Wichita store contains over 60,000-square feet of floor space.

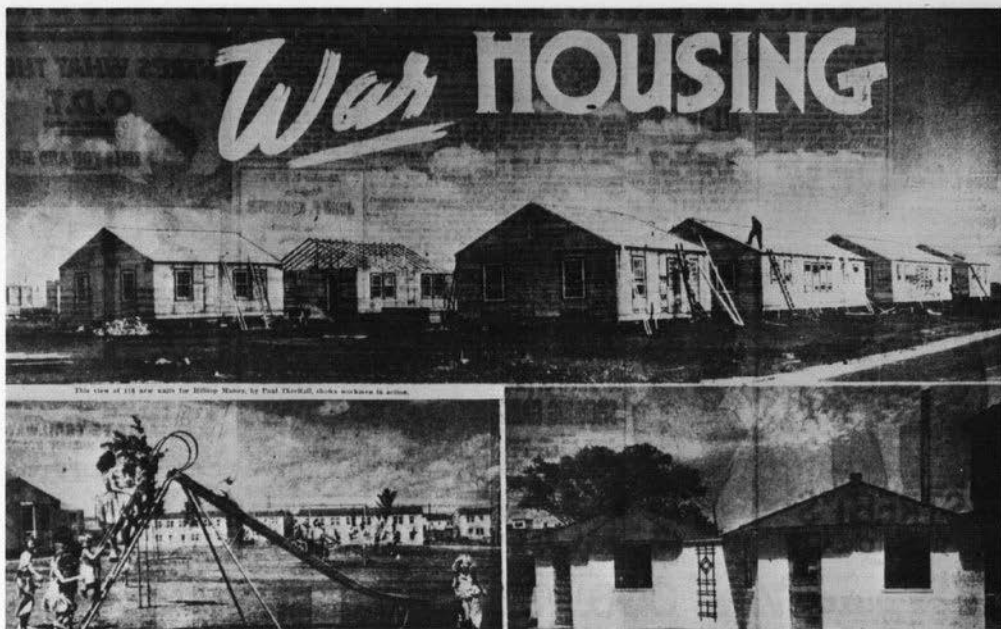
26. With thousands of people moving to Wichita to work in the aircraft factories (Boeing employment soared from 1,022 in 1940 to 29,402 in 1944), a housing shortage quickly developed. To relieve the problem, the Federal Public Housing Authority built three "temporary" housing areas: Hilltop Manor (between Lincoln and Harry, and west of Oliver) with 1,118 units housing 5,000 persons; Plainview (between Pawnee and Thirty-seventh Street South, and east of Hillside) with 4,382 units housing 20,000; and Beechwood (between Douglas and Kellogg, and west of Webb) with 500 units and housing 2,500. Rents ranged from \$29 to \$37.50 a month. The units proved not to be temporary, however. Beechwood was finally torn down, but Plainview and Hilltop Manor still are standing forty-five years after their construction.

21. Boeing, Beech, and Cessna worked together to build 750 Waco CG-4A troop-cargo gliders that were used in the Normandy invasion. Interestingly, Germany used gliders in its invasion of Crete. At the time, the *Wichita Eagle* noted that the American gliders "will be better than those used by the Germans."

22. Carpenter's readers would have known Arch Booth since he was a member of First Presbyterian Church. From 1931-1943 he was manager of the Wichita Chamber of Commerce. He then moved to Washington, D.C., to assume the position of president of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. In 1975 he retired and returned to Wichita and First Presbyterian Church. He died in 1985.

23. In 1930 the population of Wichita was 111,110. By 1940 it had grown only to 114,966; but by 1950 it was 168,279.

24. Meadow Lark Golf Course is now the L. W. Clapp Municipal Golf Course.



Wartime industry attracted workers to Wichita, creating a demand for housing. Hill Top Manor, one of the new federal housing developments, included "demountable" units (lower right). These were "constructed in Wichita mills, trucked to location, bolted together" and contained "two large rooms, a bath and a kitchenette."

One of the fundamental rules of good playing, I am told, is to keep the head down and the eyes on the ball. Just how is one to keep his eye on the ball when the air is filled with planes? We are beginning to see two motored Beechcrafts and Cessnas in swarms, and we can hardly wait for the day when the sky will be filled with flying fortresses.²⁷

It is no secret that the payrolls in Wichita now are enormous. Any sort of nickel trap will catch the limit in small change in no time. The one-armed bandits in the club house were doing their share with all the tracks leading in. At the corner of Hillside and Harry there is a new tavern, and back of the tavern there is, of all things,

27. Carpenter here means the "Superfortress," not the "Fortress." The Boeing B-17 Fortress medium range bomber was not built in Wichita. The Boeing B-29 Superfortress heavy bomber, used to bomb Japan, was built in Wichita. The first Wichita-built Superfortress came off the assembly line in April 1943 and was followed by another 1,643, including 125 in spare parts. Nearly forty-three percent of the total number of B-29s were built in Wichita.

(and shades of 1929) a miniature golf course!²⁸ Several others have made their appearance to tell the world that there are people who have no idea what to do with their money.

You may wonder what there was about my golf score which brought to mind all these novelties in Wichita—perhaps it was the pair of fives I took on No. 17.

NEWELLETTER NUMBER SEVEN

September, 1942

Dear Gang:

Come September there is one activity which is renewed in every American community, war or no war. The School Bell has rung again and, as Arch Booth puts it, Wichita schools are bursting at the seams. Buck Shaude, who has been staying with us since the Kadyks

28. Miniature golf had been popular in the 1920s, but not in the 1930s. Therefore, it came as a surprise for Carpenter to see a miniature golf course in 1942.



The Innes Tea Room, a popular dining spot, reminded patrons that rationing and lack of help had affected its ability to serve customers as it had prior to the war.

went away, reports an enrollment in Roosevelt School of one hundred above last year at the same time.²⁹ Students and teachers alike, are accepting things as they are and making the best of it as a part of their contribution to the war effort. Cafes continue to be hard put to it for help. Innes have closed the Tea Room to special groups such as The University Club, although they are attempting to maintain service to the public in the main dining room.³⁰ At noon the other day the Pup Lunch had one section roped off for lack of help.³¹ Customers

29. Buck Shaude (1907-1979) was a member of the Newell Class and continued to be a member of First Presbyterian Church until his death. He taught industrial arts in the Wichita public schools. The Rev. J. Merian Kadyk was minister of education in First Presbyterian Church from 1939-1942.

30. The Geo. Innes Co. (founded in 1897 by Walter Innes and named after his uncle, a Lawrence merchant) was Wichita's finest department store—indeed it was considered nothing less than the Marshall Field's west of Chicago. In 1951 Innes sold out to Younker Brothers of Des Moines. In 1954 the store was sold to Macy's, and in 1986 it became a part of Dillard's department stores.

For many decades the Innes Tea Room, on the sixth floor of the store, was considered the place to dine in Wichita, and even into the 1960s it was highly regarded. During the war, because of rationing, the tea room announced in a newspaper advertisement that it could serve only 600 lunches and 400 dinners a day. Macy's, particularly after changing the store's name from Innes to Macy's in 1969, allowed the tea room's quality to deteriorate, and it was closed in 1973 and replaced by a hot dog stand on the main floor.

31. The Pup Lunch was located in the now closed Allis Hotel.

lined the walls as two waitresses, the cashier, the manager, and the chef tried to put the food on the counter.

All the theaters have Bond Booths on the sidewalk or in the lobby, where stamps and bonds are sold to the theatergoers. The Jaysees had a very successful "Stamp-a-dance-stomp" (street dance) last night. One very painless stamp selling stunt involved the purchase of stamps from a pretty girl being pushed thru the streets in a wheelbarrow. With the purchase of a stamp went the privilege of pushing, or the obligation to push the sweet young thing until another sale was made, at which time the new buyer became the new pusher.

The first trip to the airport in some time, revealed that the gliders are on the way. They are being turned out fast enough to be quite impressive. The Air Raid Wardens are conducting a survey for the purpose of locating rooms for defense workers. The factories will employ several thousand workers between this date and the first of the year. Since housing is already a problem, spare rooms and basements are to be pressed into service all over the city.

Wichita U.³² is to have a football team. Freshmen will play this year. Ralph Graham, the new coach, has

32. Wichita University, founded in 1895 by the Congregational Church as Fairmount College, came under the control of the City of Wichita in 1926 as the University of Wichita. In 1964 it became the Wichita State University.

How Many Food Ration Points Does the Innes Tea Room Get?

Many people seem surprised to learn that the Innes Tea Room, just like their own household, comes under point rationing. As a matter of fact, the Innes Tea Room, just like every other eating place, is allotted no more per person of the rationed foods than a housewife receives for her family. The Innes Tea Room and the housewife have a common problem—making the most of the foods available. But add to our problem the fact that more people are dining out, satisfactory help is getting scarcer every day, many eating places have closed because of these problems, and you can readily see what we are up against.

We can serve only 600 at Noon and only 400 at Night

One thing on which we will not skimp is good service and the Innes high standard of food and food preparation. Nor will we raise prices until absolutely necessary—in fact, our prices **HAVE NOT** been raised for many months. **BUT** with the good help and fine food available, we cannot serve more than 600 people at the noon meal and 400 at the evening meal.

Sometimes you will find that we are forced to turn away customers early—occasionally at 12:30 and once in a while at 7:30 o'clock, because the limit has been reached. We regret this greatly, but there is no other way out.

One thing you will **NOT** find in the Innes Tea Room is black market food. When top quality things are not available on the legitimate markets, we simply omit them from our menus. We are sure you are with us on this policy.

*Service 11:00 a. m. to 2:00 p. m.
and 5:30 p. m. to 8:00 p. m.*

Sixth Floor

Geo. Innes co.

worked hard to get his boys in shape for a practice game with the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, September 26. Since the crowds which patronize the home games are largely local in origin, it is expected that there will be some fans on hand to see the games.

The treads on tires are wearing smooth - fan belts are wearing out - radiator hoses are giving way - and gas rationing is promised. The Kansas Medical Society has had to insist that some Doctors remain at home to care for public health - Rombold and Meeker, previously reported as going, are forced to remain at home.

NEWELLETTER NUMBER EIGHT

October, 1942

Dear Gang:

October has come to Wichita with its touch of frost, its warm sunshine and its chilling rains. For the first time your correspondent is late with the mail. The fourth Sunday has passed and October is closing with beautiful warm days and cool clear moonlit nights. You may be interested to know my excuse for having failed to get the letter out on time.

About the beginning of the school year it occurred to me that at a time like this it would be a fine thing to take a course in strategic minerals. Upon presenting myself to the geological department of the W.U. as a candidate for such a course, I found Dr. [Walter A.] Ver Wiebe two men short on his teaching staff. When he found out what I wanted, he said, "You are not coming to the University to take a course, you are coming to the University to teach." As a result of my thirst for knowledge I now find myself teaching three classes in geology, which fully occupies each morning for five days of the week. My business is conducted in the afternoons. My preparation, of which there has to be much, is done at night. The Newell Class still gets its share of my Saturdays and Sundays. All went smoothly until last week end, when the Independent Petroleum Association of America met in Wichita. As Chairman of the Committee on Exhibits, it was necessary to work at that job all of Saturday and Sunday. At that time we were enjoying and are still enjoying a visit from my Father and Mother who are here from their home in western Pennsylvania. Today I am doing my best to get back on my writing schedule.

To return now to more interesting items: University of Wichita Shockers are displaying a brand of football under Ralph Graham which is discouraging to the opponents and very interesting to watch. Freshmen are being played regularly as a wartime measure. The results to date, as I remember them, are as follows:

University of Arkansas 26 - Wichita U. 6

St. Benedicts 6 - Wichita U. 18

University of St. Louis 28 - Wichita U. 6

Washburn 0 - Wichita U. 32

Ft. Riley (Army Team) 6 - Wichita U. 0

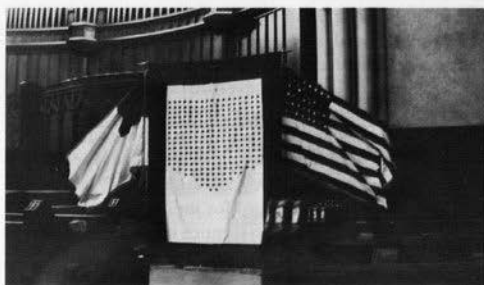
Professional football is coming to Wichita also. The Aero Parts Commandos made up of former Wichita U. stars and former stars from other colleges, with a sprinkling of seasoned professional football players, is coached by Pete Bausch. They play at Lawrence Stadium³³ each Sunday afternoon. Although I have not seen them play, they have lost no games and are reported to have a very good Club. Their schedule is supposed to stiffen as the season progresses, ending with one or two of the top ranking professional teams.

We are in the midst of a whole new series of war measures, all of which are accepted in the very finest spirit. Of course since this is, after all America, there is the healthy criticism of the "spit and whittle" club strategists, and there is the eyebrow lifting over many regulations which seem to violate the fundamental principles of good horse sense. We cooperate in every regulation in the hope that its observance will in some way bring a speedy and satisfactory end to the war.

We are now attempting to drive within the national speed limit of thirty-five miles per hour. To tell you the truth, it is such a hard job that it is much more pleasant to ride by train or bus, which is just what the law is supposed to do. Buses and trucks are also limited to thirty-five miles per hour. Can you imagine a nice trip of several hundred miles from the viewpoint of directly behind a 10-ton moving van? We have searched high and low for scrap rubber and scrap metal of all kinds. In two or three weeks we will be rationed to four gallons of gasoline per week. Those of us who have fought the battle of over-production in the oil business will be in the position of having so much gasoline we don't know what to do with it in one hand, and four gallons of gas per week in the other. We are adding coffee and meat to the list of those articles which are to be rationed very soon.

There are several changes to report in the Wichita landscape this month. The newest housing project which is well under way, will see the city built up solid from the old city limits to the Boeing factory. Gliders are now being turned out in appreciable numbers, and it is not an uncommon sight to see them in the air. A Federal Housing trailer camp, occupying one hundred and sixty

³³ Lawrence Stadium is now called Lawrence-Dumont Stadium. It honors R. E. Lawrence, an early Wichita pioneer and member of First Presbyterian Church, and Ray "Hap" Dumont, founder of the National Baseball Congress.



A service flag in the First Presbyterian sanctuary reminded all of those absent from family and church, and the Newell class made its contribution by writing regularly to those in the service. Pictured are Myrtle Brady, Helen Day, Ed Means, Helen Sayles, Cecil Kalbsleich, Gertrude Garvey, and Nida Ella Logan.



acres, has been placed just south and east of the Veterans' Hospital on Kellogg. Can you imagine how many trailers can be placed side by side on land one-half mile long and one-half mile wide?³⁴

NEWELLETTER NUMBER NINE

November, 1942

Dear Gang:

For a number of reasons, not the least of which are rubber shortage and gasoline rationing which is just around the corner, the bus driver has been elevated to a new position of honor and respect in the community. He now occupies the position formerly held by the banker. Now the banker hangs to the straps during the rush hours which are limited by nature to twenty-four hours each day, and the bus driver is in the proverbial "driver's seat." It might be worth while to try to catch a glimpse of this overgrown village through the eyes of the man in the driver's seat of most any bus.

Among the more interesting passengers is Mrs. Slofoot, the uppety dame who always expects the driver to wait while she walks the last hundred yards to the bus stop. And does she burn up if the driver fails to wait for her? Her complaint has reached the office before the driver reaches his next stop. Maybe you have never noticed how character can be read by the way women catch a bus. The women who run are always smiling and good natured. The ones who make the driver wait while they take their own good time are usually sour pusses of the first water. The bus driver's word of warning to you single men is, "Never marry a woman who

will not run to catch a bus." Then there is the lady near the end of the line who always has her washing out before anyone else on Monday mornings. Something new has been added. Those long drawers can mean several things in this man's town; the chill of the graveyard shift at the airplane factories, the cold dampness of the duck blinds, or the raw north wind which blows across the bleachers out at Wichita U. Then too, those fresh white squares hung out for the first time a couple of houses down the street have a meaning all their own.³⁵ (Former Newell Class members perhaps.) Then there is the Filling Station which only a few months ago was the busiest place in town - now a kid gets air for his football and hopeful would-be drivers of cars bring in their tattered tires for patching. The filling station attendant used to say, "Fill 'er up?" Now he says, "Don't look now, Mister, but your air is showing." And there is a new sign at the Curb Service Joint, "No Curb Service. Come Inside Please." Might have added, "Help Yourself When You Get Inside." Another new sign in the grocery store window, "Turkey fifty-three cents per pound!" They say there is no "ceiling" on poultry but it looks to the bus driver and others as if turkey has hit the ceiling. Henry Ware Allen,³⁶ even though blind and aged, is the most cheerful and appreciative bus rider in town. He is a better man at his seventy some years with no eyes than lots of us are at a much lesser age with two good eyes. He gives the best that he has to the job of living just as he finds it and it is more than enough.

35. In these modern days of Pampers, some may forget that once upon a time diapers were made of cloth and had to be laundered and, because there were no clothes dryers, hung out to dry.

36. Carpenter describes Henry Ware Allen as a well-known "character."

34. There were 318 trailers with 1,300 residents.

That kid with the ice skates climbing on the bus is due for disappointment this week because they have a broken pipe at the Alaskan [Ice Palace and Skating Rink] and there is no material available immediately for keeping recreational enterprises in condition. It took that woman a whole minute to pull herself on the bus - going to have to get a block and tackle for the cripples since everybody rides the bus these days. More soldiers at the Union Station.³⁷ Not many soldiers are bus riders because we still have no camps near at hand and there are only a few boys home on furlough at any one time. Here we are, not quite to town and folks are packed in like sardines in a can. Why does every one want to stand in the front? It used to be like this during the peak load in the evening and then only on the way out from town. Now they hang to the straps on the way to town all hours of the day. Where do the people all come from? What are they going to town for? You would think that every day was dollar day! They have an Extra on the street, - American Troops Occupy French North Africa. - A hundred thousand swell guys are out there fighting so that folks like bus drivers and bus riders can be on their jobs without danger of bombs. Maybe this bus driver should be driving a tank, maybe he ought - - "Say, driver! What are you dreamin' about anyhow? Keep that bus movin'. People have to get to work. We're fightin' a war!" Maybe the cop is right - we are fightin' a war in our own way right here in the streets of Wichita. When they need bus drivers and such out there to drive the tanks and trucks, we'll do that too. That is how the bus driver sees this village these days.

We are about to enter upon the Holiday Season and for that reason I am tempted to break over and give you the essence of what I have been saying to the Newell Class the past several months. They have been reminded that wherever they may be or regardless of the circumstances in which they find themselves, each person possesses a priceless something which, unless he wills it otherwise, cannot be touched by any of the hardships or suffering which this world has to offer. That invulnerable something is the immortal Soul. Let us be grateful in this Thanksgiving season that even in the midst of the trials and the turmoil of the war the Soul is safe from harm and free to grow. While the person of John Bunyan was in prison his Spirit which was free, gave to the world Pilgrim's Progress. Christmas will soon be on hand too. Let us remember this year that the way of life which Christ described as The Kingdom of God, is an ideal toward which Mankind is laboriously and painfully

striving; that the road upward crosses many valleys; occasionally we descend into valleys which are so deep that many faint hearts are tempted to abandon all of that which they have believed in and striven toward. Men and women of courage and faith will plod their way through these trying days in the knowledge that the road just ahead will carry all mankind to new heights in a direction which we have called Godward. Christmas this year is an empty symbol for men of little faith. For men of great faith it is the assurance of better and nobler days to come.

NEWELLETTER NUMBER TEN

December, 1942

Dear Gang:

An old adage tells us that approaching events cast their shadows before. And even though we are at war the sure signs of Christmas are all about us. The cutout Manger Scene, a gift from the Kadyks treasured these several years, has taken its Yuletide place upon the piano; mysterious whisperings and secret trips to the locked cedar closet in the upstairs hall; and the arrival of tempting packages from the grandparents keeps the children in a painful state of anticipation. A tree has finally been purchased and judging from the price it would seem that a very special gold plated variety of fir has been developed especially for this Christmas Season. The double string of lights with the elusive "blackout" bulb had to be connected once again and this year it was more of a struggle than ever to get the stars to shine. Don's electric train had to be hauled out from under the bed and repaired so that his father's Christmas would be complete. A few soldiers and tanks and guns have been placed in the cars which in other years have hauled coal and oil. Even in a child's playthings we see the symbol of the things which have happened to all of us.

Shopping this year has taken on something of the nature of a military operation. The direct frontal attack is useless; a flanking movement is just as bad; it is only by infiltration through and behind the lines that the real battle ground can be reached. Having arrived it is a bit of a shock to find that the shelves of the stores are beginning to resemble the shelves in Old Mother Hubbard's Cupboard. For example, the only watches available are diamond watches from one hundred and fifty up, and that infernal machine, the alarm clock, has disappeared from the market entirely. From the office window this afternoon I saw a little old man with a few bundles and his cane trying to turn West against the Eastbound pedestrian traffic on Douglas. He was buffeted about like a chip of wood in a mountain stream

37. Passenger trains no longer serve Wichita, and Union Station is now an office building.

WHAT TO DO IN AN AIR RAID

Official—by the U. S. Office of Civilian Defense



1. STAY HOME

The safest place is in an air raid in at home. If you get away from home, get under cover in the streets. Avoid crowded places. Stay out of crowds.

The enemy wants you to run and into the streets create a mob, start a panic. Don't do it. If incendiary bombs fall, play a sponge from a garden hose (never a tank or stream of water on the bomb itself) to a stream to put out any fire started by the bomb. Switch back to a spray for the bomb. The bomb will burn for about 15 minutes if left alone and about 2 minutes under a fine water spray. A jet splash, stream or bucket of water will make it explode.

Under no conditions, turn a bathtub and bucket full of water for the use of the fire department. In case water mains are broken.

If you have a window of small window, the kind you find outside schools, lock it with your finger over the handle. Make a spray. Don't use the chemical kind (only cylinders of liquid) as bombs. It is all right for ordinary fire.

But above all, keep cool, stay home, if some one member of the family is to be home air raid warden who will remember all the rules and what to do. Mother makes the best.



2. PUT OUT LIGHTS

Whether or not blackout is ordered, don't show more light than is necessary. If planes come over, put out or cover all lights at once—don't wait for the blackout order. The light that can't be seen will never give a tip. Remember a candle light may be seen for miles from the air.

If you have pictures, overdrapes, or curtains, arrange a double thickness over your windows. Bookends will do. If you have heavy black paper, paste it on your windows. Don't crowd or mangle paper to get it, however. You probably have everything you need at home. Be ingenious—improvise.

Should you get an air raid warning, remember to shut off gas stoves, gas furnaces, and gas light, or both. Bomb explosions may blow them out from blast effect. Gas that collects may be explosive later.

Prepare one room the one with the least windows, or on the strongest part of your house, for a refuge room. Put food and drinking water in it. Put a sturdy table in it. Put mattresses and chairs in it. Take a mattress or two and a deck of cards with you. Take things like crepe-soles and dentures with you when you go into it. Take toilet facilities, paper, a mirror. If you have a portable radio, take that too. Above all, keep calm. Stay at home. Put out lights.



3. LIE DOWN

If bombs start to fall near you, lie down. You will feel the blast least that way; escape fragments or splinters.

The safest place is under a good stout table—the stronger the legs the better.

A mattress under a table combines comfort with safety. The enemy may use explosive bombs or incendiary bombs, or both. If incendiaries are used, it's more important to deal with them than to be safe from blast. So defeat the incendiary with a cover (cover a splash or stream of water, then go back to safety under a table in a refuge room.

Most raids will likely be over in your immediate neighborhood in a short time. However, stay under cover till the "all clear" is sounded.

Know your raid alarm. Know the "all clear." Official tests of these will come to you from your Air Raid Warden. Don't believe rumors. Watch the paper for an air raid alarm description. Ask the warden when he comes. Should your house be hit, keep cool. Answer tapings from rescue crews, if you are trapped. You may likely won't be either hit or trapped, but if you are, you can depend on rescue would go after you. Again—keep cool, and wait. Don't tell other you hear them coming to you, unless they tell you to. Keep cool! Just keep cool, but be the enemy more than anything else you can do. Keep calm. Stay at home. Put out lights. Lie down.



4. STAY AWAY FROM WINDOWS

Glass shatters easily, so stay away from windows. Don't go to windows and look out in an air raid. It's dangerous thing, and being the enemy. The Air Raid Warden is out there watching for you. Again we say, get off the streets if planes come over.

At night, there is danger of being caught in blast from explosions. Anti-aircraft fire means falling shrapnel. You are safe from it indoors, away from windows. It is more important to shut a place than it is to see it from a window.

Stay in your refuge room, away from windows. That is the safest place. Go there at the first alarm, stay there until the "all clear" is sounded. All, keep calm. Stay home. Put out lights. Lie down. Stay away from windows. Do not use air separating, we would rather repeat until we were told that have you forget.

You can do all those things without any special equipment other than what you have now to your use. You can help lick the bugs, with your bare hands, if you will do just those few, simple things. Be a good fellow and follow instructions and keep well. Do not be a wise guy and get hurt.

Review of New City Air Raid Regulations

Wichita is under full wartime regulations, with a blackout ordinance and authorized air raid warning services and auxiliary fire and police corps, as a result of adoption of new city ordinance.

An air raid warning signal, under the new law, will consist of a series of short blasts from sirens, whistles or other sound-making devices continuing for approximately three minutes. The all clear signal shall consist of one long blast continuing for approximately three minutes.

There are stringent penalties for violations of the blackout ordinance—specifically, \$500 or six months in jail, or both.

Wards, hereby, is what you are expected to do when the air raid alarm is given.

These Five Join Together in Making This Announcement Possible. They Urge You to Co-operate With the Air Raid Wardens and to Keep This Message for Future Reference.

Cormick-Armstrong Press
Aircraft Products Co.
Southwest Cracker Co.

The Aircraft Steel and Supply Co.
419-421 N. Water

B-R-C Bearing Co.
A Friend
Davis-Westhott Aircraft Products Company

American cities faced with the unknown, took seriously the precautions against injury and destruction by air raids. This Wichita Beacon announcement of July 1942 encouraged civilian preparedness and explained the effects of incendiary bombs and falling shrapnel.

and it was only by expert use of his cane that he was able to make the turn at all. There are no outside lights this Christmas. Perhaps that is another indication that Christmas is being celebrated "on the inside" this year. The real Spirit of the Season is there and from every house a bit of it manages to leak out in the form of lights through a window or a sprig of holly on the door. This is not a season of light hearted gayety. The children will be thrilled with their toys. Those of us who are face to face with events are sobered by the realization that there can be no gay Christmases until Victory has brought every one of you home from all corners of the world.

My first letter from North Africa was from Dick Wellman. A few days later Bill Chapman's letter to the class arrived. The news was of a very general nature for perfectly understandable reasons. Like the news commentators on the radio who are able to make so very much out of so very little, we concluded that they were safe and sound, that they have seen action, that they have quitted themselves in a manner of which we are all proud, and that they more than ever love the good old U.S.A. We were disappointed to learn that mail has been slow in reaching them. The members of the Newell Class have been especially faithful in their letter writing.³⁸ Please know that letters are on the way and that eventually they will arrive. Perhaps at times other supplies are considered of more importance than mail.

Wichita has been organizing its Civil Defense for more than a year now. Last week we participated in a

blackout which covered several of the Midwestern States. Since most of our affairs these days seem to be patterned after the British way of doing things we imported a thick fog for the night of the blackout. With the fine cooperation of the citizens and with the visibility at less than five hundred feet, the test was a complete success.

Gas rationing has gone into effect and after several weeks we are able to see something of its workings. Non-essential driving is out. Those who need gasoline in order to conduct their business are able to get it. If the business is essential to the war effort they get all that they actually need. If it is non-essential they get only a portion of the gas which they actually need. Perhaps this is the place to say a word in defense of that very much discussed citizen John Doe. You may have heard that there is considerable grumbling because of rationing and other war measures on the home front. There is no grumbling because every man and woman is willing and anxious to give or to do anything which will contribute to the safety and well being of our men and bring victory as quickly as possible. There is criticism of the blundering and shortsighted manner in which many of the war measures are initiated and carried out. We believe that this is an "all out" war and that the very first place for the effective operation of the "all out" principle should be in the government itself, with politics and slick schemes for getting votes completely out until after the war. It is this criticism of failure in high places which our controlled news refers to as grumbling. Remember that there is a great difference between grumbling and criticism.³⁹ [KH]

38. Letter writing was a part of Newell class activities on Sunday evenings and after Sunday breakfasts in Linwood Park. A letter to each serviceman would be passed from person to person until all had written.

39. Carpenter states, "Without being maudlin, I wanted to tell these men we knew what they were doing for us, that we were grateful, and that we were responding in the proper manner."