



# Merry Christmas



**Weather Forecast**  
Courtesy United States Weather Bureau  
Rain; Sunday cloudy.  
3am|5am|6am|7am|8am|9am|10am  
31|31|31|31|31|31|32

## CHATTANOOGA NEWS-FREE PRESS

CHRISTMAS EDITION

Only Chattanooga Newspaper with Associated Press, United Press, International News Services, Acme Pictures and NEA Features

VOL. XI, NO. 100.

16 PAGES

CHATTANOOGA, TENNESSEE, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 25, 1943.

Entered at the Postoffice at Chattanooga, Tenn., as Second-Class Mail Matter.

FIVE CENTS.

# ALLIED FORCES ENTER ORTONA



**WHITE (ICE) CHRISTMAS** — Chattanoogaers awakened this Christmas morn to find ice gleaming from trees and shrubbery. Picturesque scenes of beauty were everywhere, although the ice was dangerous for trees, phone and electric wires and traffic. Anyhow, it was sort of a "white" Christmas, as this view taken in National Cemetery shows. — (Staff Photo by Bob Sherrill.)

## RUSSIANS DRIVE GERMANS NEAR POLISH BORDER

**Reds Capture Gorodok, 60 Towns, in Strong Push at Vitebsk**

LONDON, Dec. 25 (AP)—Spurred by capture of powerfully-defended Gorodok, mainstay of the German defense line 20 miles north of Vitebsk, the Russian Baltic army today pounded at enemy forces 30 miles from Polotsk, hinge of the Nazi's east-west supply artery in north Russia, and less than 20 miles from the old Polish frontier. A Moscow communique placed advance sections of Gen. Ivan Bagramian's army within 15 miles of the Vitebsk-Polotsk rail line from the north. At the town of Dubki, swept up along with Gorodok and 60 other communities in yesterday's drive down the Nevel-Vitebsk railway, they resumed their march toward Polotsk with ski troops and cavalry spearheading the way.



The Christmas star of 1943 is also the star of hope for millions of war-weary men and women and little children all over the world—hope that the most frightful war in human history will come to an end, with the light of victory shining on the banners of the nations banded together against tyranny, aggression and the glorification of might over right. It is a star of hope that the people of the enemy nations will, at long last, revolt against the disaster brought upon them, their children and their children's children by power-crazy mis-leaders, and take the first steps on the road back toward peace on earth and good will among men.

## GERMAN 'CHUTE TROOPS SENT INTO CONFLICT

**Motor Torpedo Vessels Torpedo Nazi Cruiser Off Yugoslav Coast**

ALLIED HEADQUARTERS IN ALGIERS, Dec. 25 (AP)—A furious "Stalingrad-like" battle, without letup for the Yule holidays, raged on the Italian front as the Germans threw in parachute troops in an attempt to hold the strategic port city of Ortona on the Adriatic, it was announced today.

(The Cairo radio said that Ortona, last important bastion protecting Pescara, is now in Allied hands.) The German First Parachute Division, reinforced by fresh battalions from the Rome area, joined the fighting at Ortona, where the Germans are clinging to the northwest corner of the city. There are new elements from three German divisions fighting for Ortona.

Allied motor torpedo boats cruising off the Yugoslav coast torpedoed the ancient German cruiser Dalmacija. On the Fifth Army front across the Italian peninsula to the west, American troops captured two hills and high ground two miles east of Acqua Fondola.

Aerial operations also were hampered by the weather. American Marauders, however, attacked the Cecina railroad yards on the Leghorn-Rome highway. Motor torpedo boats found the small German cruiser Dalmacija stranded off Silba Island between Zara and Pola and sent several torpedoes into the craft. The 2,300-ton ship formerly belonged to the Yugoslav navy, having been purchased from the German government in 1926 and used as a training ship. It formerly was the German cruiser Niobe, built in 1899.

It is not known how the cruiser happened to be stranded, but it is thought the ship might have been damaged by aerial attack. In addition to the First Parachute Division, elements of the German 26th Tank and 90th Grenadier Divisions are fighting for Ortona.

**TANKS IN BASEMENTS** The Germans placed tanks in the basements of houses where they were almost impossible to root out, as the more rubble falls on a tank the stronger it becomes, a military commentator said.

Canadians who have been fighting in the city for six days are now storming these basement strong-points one by one with hand grenades and "Molotov cocktails."

In one action the Canadians took 44 prisoners. Some progress was made beyond the Ortona-Orsogna road, but vigorous fighting raged around Villa Grande.

On the Fifth Army front patrol activity went on in the snow-covered mountains east of Acqua Fondola. Several sharp actions were fought. In the lowlands of the Lira Valley, swollen rivers flooded large areas.

Aerial activity dwindled to the lowest point in many weeks, with virtually no sweeps being made over the front because of low-hanging clouds and rain. American Marauders of the 15th Air Force that bombed rail communications at Cecina were believed to have destroyed a bridge in addition to causing severe damage in the yards. One German plane was destroyed during the day.

## British Ruler Pays Tribute To U.S. Power

LONDON, Dec. 25 (AP)—King George VI in a Christmas broadcast today forecast a victory achieved only after "perhaps harder working and harder fighting than ever before," and paid tribute to the war strength of the United States.

"We shall not rest from the task until it is nobly ended," he said, cautioning that "we have no easy dreams of the days that lie close at hand."

## GERMANS GIVEN YULE RESPITE

**Air Attacks Raze Nazi Military Targets**

LONDON, Dec. 25 (AP)—A grand total of 200,000 tons of bombs have been dropped on Allied targets within Germany since the beginning of the war, the air ministry announced today.

By LEO V. DOLAN  
LONDON, Dec. 25 (AP)—Mysterious military installations—humored as enemy rocket gun emplacements—lay in ruins today after the largest American air armada ever sent on a single mission climaxed a week-long battering of the "invasion coast" of northern France.

A Christmas respite from British-based air raids was granted the Germans when a lull in the Allied aerial offensive developed due to adverse weather conditions. The RAF did not operate from Britain last night and there were no immediate signs of their operation over the foggy channel early today.

Britain itself passed a raid-free night. The vast force of more than 1,300 planes of the Eighth United States Air Force loosed at least 1,500 tons of bombs on enemy targets in the Pas De Calais area. An official announcement triumphantly proclaimed that the record Christmas Eve raid was carried out without the loss of a single plane, despite its being a daylight operation.

While specifically he is in charge of the "western front," he undoubtedly is earmarked for additional responsibilities, as hinted by President Roosevelt in saying that Eisenhower would lead from "other points" also. Eisenhower also is the most experienced amphibious commander in either Britain or America.

He reorganized American forces last February when they suffered a crushing defeat at Faid Pass in Tunisia, and took personal command of all Allied forces for the Sicily invasions. He is willing to take big risks if the stakes justify it. Few appointments, said Reuters, could have been more generally popular, and the news will be gen-

(Continued on Page 2, Column 4)

## WARMER, RAIN TODAY, TONIGHT

Chattanooga had a white Christmas morning—with icicles and frozen rain instead of the traditional snow.

The weather bureau forecast more rain but "not quite so cold" weather for today and tonight, with a low of 32 expected early tomorrow morning. Sunday's weather will be cloudy and cool.

## United Nations Hail Eisenhower Choice

**Appointment of American General to Lead Invasion Given General Approval**

LONDON, Dec. 25 (AP)—The grand Allied command, as announced by President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill, under Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower for the final assault upon Europe was generally approved here today as one of the finest teams of expert military leadership.

Every commander, from Eisenhower down, apparently was picked for his knowledge and ability successfully to accomplish a specific mission.

In the other changes, Gen. Sir Henry Maitland Wilson became the supreme commander of the entire Mediterranean area in succession to Eisenhower; Gen. Sir Harold Alexander, the commander-in-chief of Allied armies in Italy; Gen. Sir Bernard Montgomery, the commander-in-chief of British armies serving under Eisenhower; and Lt. Gen. Carl A. Spaatz, the commander of the strategic American bombing force operating against Germany.

Eisenhower is expected in London shortly to take up his new duties. Some staff officers who served with him in Africa already are here.

Here are sketches of the men who will devise final plans for the destruction of Hitler's European fortresses:

**GREAT CO-ORDINATOR** EISENHOWER—The great Allied "co-ordinator." His appointment caused no surprise in African military circles and was hailed there as a direct result of his outstanding success in welding the Allied armies, air forces and navies into one striking force.

(Continued on Page 2, Column 4)

## Chattanooga 'Santa Clauses' Provide Joy for Orphanages

Organization, Formed 40 Years Ago, Doing Great Part in Spreading Yuletide Cheer

By W. G. FOSTER  
Chattanooga's "Santa Clauses," still on the annual list while several, as in the case of R. C. Jones Sr., represented by R. C. Jones Jr., and Jo Conn Guild Sr. by Joe Conn Guild Jr., have died or retired and passed their share on to others, and some as Linus Lewellyn and Milt Freeman, also have passed on.

## Yule Fund 'Over Top'

Contributions to date . . . \$5,505.50  
Salvation Army "Mile-of-Dimes" and pots . . . 6,137.98  
In memory of Reba Jean Wattenbarger . . . 5.00  
Mrs. C. S. Tume . . . 1.00  
A Friend . . . 5.00  
Ann Pickard . . . 5.00  
Mattie E. Cahill . . . 5.00  
Martin-Thompson Co. . . 10.00  
Combustion Engine Repairing employees . . . 23.03  
Mrs. Barlow Strang . . . 10.00  
L. H. Gammon . . . 5.00  
Mr. and Mrs. B. H. . . . 2.00  
Potter . . . 5.00  
L. H. Harbin . . . 5.00  
Total contributions \$11,724.60

Needy Chattanooga families today were to be grateful participants in their happiest Christmas ever, as The News-Free Press-Salvation Army Christmas Basket Fund rolled to an all-time record total of \$11,724.60.

Contributions to the Mile-of-Dimes board on Market Street and the various Salvation Army "boil-pots" throughout the city reached a record high of \$6,137.98. (The figure is exclusive of \$688.50 taken in on the "dime board" when the Half-Century Club manned it Thursday.)

Contributions by check and cash to The News-Free Press and the Salvation Army totaled \$5,505.50. Last-minute contributions, still (Continued on Page 5, Column 6)

## Christmas, '43

(Editor's Note—The following gem of poetry was written by Mrs. Mary McKnight, former News-Free Press reporter, and appeared first in this newspaper on Dec. 25, 1941, first wartime Christmas in the U. S. in 22 years. Because of its beauty and appropriateness, the poem is reprinted today.)

Thank God for immortality—  
For warmth of heart at Christmas tide,  
For love and generosity,  
Thank God that these have never died.  
More poignant in the face of wars  
They live. No enemy can loot,  
No foe destroy, no blood-stained Mars  
Crush them beneath a heavy boot.  
Thank God that through the night  
Once more  
Carol rings out hopefully,  
Nolly wreath hangs on the door,  
And tinsel glitters on the tree,  
A knobby stocking, treasure-filled  
and gay,  
Greets merry eyes again on  
Christmas Day.—M. McK.

## 6 HURT HERE IN ACCIDENTS

**Traffic Mishaps Decline Despite Icy Streets**

The chief dispatcher at the Electric Power Board reported at 10 a.m. that the ice storm had disrupted electric service to all of Lookout Mountain and that trucks had not been able to ascend the mountain because of ice on the streets. Service in other sections including Ooltewah, Red Bank, North Chattanooga, Brainerd and Eastdale was also disrupted, it was reported.

Six persons were injured in traffic accidents in the Chattanooga area last night and today and police reported that the number of traffic mishaps had been much lower than expected after ice storms coated the city's streets last night.

Five persons were injured shortly after 6 o'clock last night when a Tennessee Coach Lines bus collided with an automobile driven by Elliott D. Trude, 108 South Lovell Road. The wreck occurred on Brainerd Road at Oriole Drive.

Injured were Elliott Trude, leg injuries; Mrs. Elliott Trude, minor injuries of the chest and legs; C. L. Byrd, Cleveland, Tenn., possible internal injuries; W. D. Eaton, Cleveland; Mrs. Dean Powell, 101 East Third Street, both slightly injured. After treatment at Nevell Sanitarium, Trude was arrested on charges of driving while drunk and assault with an automobile, police reported.

Chief Homer Edmondson, Capt. Roy Hyatt and Officers S. P. Swafford, Plummer and Logan Stroud were on the call.

Mrs. Fred Wood, 5011 Club Drive, was injured when the automobile, driven by her husband (Continued on Page 2, Column 4)

## MARINE COOPER DIES IN ACTION

**Chattanooga Killed in Country's Service**

Marine Cpl. Thomas H. Cooper, 22, son of Thomas G. Cooper, 3615 Fourth Avenue, has been killed in action in an undisclosed theater of operations, the father was notified this week by official USMC message.

Reported missing in action in the Asiatic theater of operations is S/Sgt. Ralph H. Phillips, formerly of this city and Valley Head, Ala. And Seaman 2/C Stanley Woody, 22, of St. Elmo, who was on the cruiser Houston with Seaman James M. Ballinger, has been reported held by the Japanese at Moulmein, Burma, same prison in which Ballinger is interned.

Cpl. Cooper served in the marine corps three years, was formerly employed at Richmond Hosiery Mills. He is the brother of Mrs. Katherine Brogden, Mrs. Betty Sue Huckabee, Mickey and Jerry Cooper, Chattanooga, and Bobby Cooper, U. S. Navy.

## Allied Bombers Can Continue Smashing Assaults in Pacific

U. S. Admiral Says Enemy Airfields on Rabaul to Be Knocked Out for Land Forces

By FRED HAMPSON  
AN ADVANCED SOUTH PACIFIC BASE, Dec. 23 (Delayed) (AP)—The Allies can repeat what they did on Bougainville in the way of knocking out enemy air strength ahead of the ground forces, Vice-Adm. Aubrey W. Fitch of San Diego, Calif., commander of Allied air forces in the South Pacific said today.

"We expect the Japs to reinforce Rabaul with air strength," he said in an interview. "We have not neutralized those fields yet but we can and will, just as we knocked out during the Empress Augusta Bay operations."

## 1 DEAD, 15 HURT IN PHILLY FIRE

**Three-Story Apartment Gutted by Flames**

PHILADELPHIA, Dec. 25 (AP)—One elderly woman was killed and 15 other persons were injured today in a five-alarm fire that swept a three-story apartment house in suburban Germantown.

Earlier police reports that 15 persons were trapped and lost their lives were not borne out by a search of the wreckage. However, rescue workers continued to look for bodies.

The dead woman, identified as Mrs. Bertha Wallace, 70, and 10 of the injured were taken to Germantown Hospital. Three of them were firemen who were treated and discharged. Two of the other victims, all of whom suffered from burns and smoke inhalation, were in serious condition. Five persons were treated at the scene.

Medium Bomber Falls, Four Officers Killed  
FORT KNOX, Ky., Dec. 25 (AP)—A medium bomber stationed at Godman Field, Fort Knox, crashed in a field at Colesburg, near Elizabethtown, Ky., while on a combat training flight Friday, killing all of its crew of four officers.