

**THE POINTER**

Weekly Paper of the U. S. S. West Point

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**EDITORIALS****AT WAR**

Following Japan's treacherous and vicious attack on United States' insular possessions last Sunday, the President of the United States, before the members of the Supreme Court, the members of the Cabinet, the Senate and the House of Representatives, declared, on Monday at 12:30 P.M. (E.S.T.) that a state of war exists between the United States and Japan. Thus we become a belligerent nation in World War II.

It has been well recognized that any war with Japan would consist largely of Naval action. But this does not mean that combatant ships alone are to be employed. The whole Navy will be needed, and must be at its best.

The U. S. S. WEST POINT is a fine and worthy ship. She must be ready along with all other Naval vessels to play such part as the exigencies of the war may demand.

We need to realize the seriousness of the step our nation has taken, and to do all in our power to make our ship as effective and efficient as possible in order to carry out any duty to which we may be assigned. There must be no let-down anywhere.

This stern, realistic fact needs to be realized—the United States is at war.

**HOSPITALITY**

It would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to think of any port that could display a finer spirit of hospitality than is being shown to the officers and men of the United States Navy in Capetown.

Numerous forms of entertain-

ment and transportation have efficiently and with fine generosity been furnished to the officers and men of this vessel.

This city with its attractive mountainous background will never be forgotten by us; but among its most fascinating recollections will be the fine spirit of its citizens and their service organizations who have succeeded in making our stay here so pleasant.

We shall never forget Capetown's hospitality.

**A LETTER TO MOTHER**

You may write a thousand letters,  
To the girl that you adore.  
And declare in every letter  
That you love her more and more.  
You may praise her grace and beauty,  
In a thousand glowing lines,  
And keep the fondest memories,  
In the back of your mind.  
If you had the pen of Shakespeare,  
You would use it every day.  
In composing written lyrics,  
To your sweetheart far away.  
But the letter far more welcome,  
To an older, gentler breast,  
Is the letter to your Mother,  
From the boy she loves the best.

She will read it very often,  
When the lights are soft and low.  
Sitting in the same old corner,  
Where she held you years ago.  
And regardless of its diction,  
Or its spelling, or its style,  
Although its composition,  
Would provoke a critic's smile.

In her sweet and tender fingers,  
It becomes a work of art.  
Stained by tears of joy and sadness,  
As she hugs it to her heart.  
Yes, the letters of all letters,  
Look wherever you may roam.  
Is the letter to your Mother,  
From her boy away from home.

**AMERICAN FIELD SERVICE**

In September, 1914, a handful of Americans living in Europe drove their own cars as improvised ambulances in the first battle of the Marne. This was the beginning of the American Field Service.

Money was collected in the United States for ambulances and young Americans volunteered to drive them. Many of the volunteers came directly from colleges and universities. They bought their own outfits, paid their own transportation from the U. S. A. to the theater of war and served without pay. By the time the American Expeditionary Forces arrived in 1917, 2500 men, serving in 35 ambulance sections had brought back 600,000 wounded from the front. The A. E. F. then took over the American Field Service as an integral part of the army. Eventually many of the men became officers in this and other branches of the army.

After the Armistice the organization was kept alive and surplus funds were used for an exchange of scholarships in France and American universities.

When war broke out in 1939 the American Field Service resumed its original activities as an ambulance service.

In the Battle of France, from the middle of May, 1940, to the collapse of the French armies, one section was continually in the field. Five other sections were ready to move when the Armistice came.

Since then the American Field Service has sent some 200 ambulances and mobile surgical units to England and Greece.

As a result of negotiations between the War Office in London, the British Military Mission in Washington and the U. S. Department of State, the American Field Service now has been given the privilege of serving with the British Forces. The schedule calls for 400 ambulances and 1000 men. The first contingent is on board.

Overheard from a troop lookout enroute to Capetown:

"Think of the irony of it. Here I am on watch in shorts and an overcoat, suffering from sunburn while freezing to death."