

Thing I remember—the stillness of that morning.

I was working about the house, touching up the paint on the garage door, moving a few plants that didn't do so well on the north side and Mary—that's my wife—had just gotten home from church and went to turn on the radio.

And . . . there it was. We didn't do much after that. Mary fixed up our dinner but none of us, even the children, were very hungry. The Pierces dropped over for a while and my neighbor came across while I was tinkering with Nancy's tricycle. And the next day I was late at work because I stopped off with Arnold when he enlisted. Things didn't really change for a time, I guess.

Like so many others, I figured it would be a short war. Did a lot of bragging, at first, about how stupid those Japs were and how we'd lick 'em in six months. We even hoped to drive back to the old home-town next summer in a new car. But—well, you know the story.

Bataan. Corregidor. Wake Island. Burma.

In June our vacation fund followed the new car money in War Bonds and I was a full-fledged Air Raid Warden, Mary was deep in Red Cross, Nancy was filling up her War Stamp book. And here we are.

I guess we Americans have changed quite a bit the past year. Just how—and how deeply—let's leave that to the historians. I really haven't had time to philosophize about it.

Take me, for instance. Maybe I ought to be worried

about lots of things. About how we're going to get by on four gallons of gasoline a week. About things we won't be able to buy—and I used to drink four or five cups of coffee a day. About taxes and such matters.

But I can't seem to get upset about those things any more. They used to seem important. Well—so did a new car and a trip back east. I'm thinking about only one thing now—the same thing you are—and I feel better, calmer, stronger for it—inside. All I want to do is help—some more.

I think there's been a little too much beating around the bush; too much unnecessary worrying about our morale and that sort of thing; too much thought about sparing our feelings, sugar-coating the bitter taste of the big job we're up against. Let's skip that from now on. Americans don't need any one to play nurse-maid to them. This isn't a kids' war.

Just give us the facts—the whole story. Tell us what's needed. Tell us how we can help. If it's going to take the car out of our garage or the steak off our dinner table or two weeks' pay every month or our spare pair of shoes—fine! Just say so.

There have been too many people the last 12 months claiming the need for safeguarding this, that or interest of ours. Well—the only interest we have—all of us—is winning this war.

Today—nearly one year after Pearl Harbor—is as good a time as any to make that point finally and completely clear.

City Buys Three Lots Priced at \$14,000 in 1933 for Only \$1,807

Back in 1933 when the development of the Torrance civic center was being planned, Mayor Scott Ludlow and his city council successfully negotiated for the purchase of land for the city hall, police station, water department office and Civic Auditorium.

But the site for the public library, which was to be located at the southwest corner of El Prado and Cravens, gave Ludlow and the 1933 council a lot of trouble. The owner demanded \$14,000 for the three lots. Because this was obviously too high—the land for the Civic Auditorium cost only approximately \$6,000—the city had to give up plans to locate the library there and purchased its present site at the corner of Post and Cravens avenues.

Today the city owns the southwest corner of El Prado and Cravens and paid only \$1,807.31 for the three lots, having purchased them at tax sale. The property is now tentatively recorded as a city park. Any development must await the end of the war.

When informed of the tax sale purchase for \$12,000 less than the owner demanded of the city nine years ago, Ludlow said:

"Well, think of that! We wanted that land very much when we were planning the civic center and erection of the library on that site would have completed the project according to original plans. But we felt that we were being 'held up' and refused to pay the price. I'm glad the city owns the three lots at that corner now and after that war I hope considerable thought will be given to the development of the property."

Advanced First Aid Class Starts Friday

Beginning tomorrow (Friday) night at 7 o'clock an Advanced First Aid class will start in the city hall courtroom with Fred Folts, chief first aider for the Torrance Casualty Station, as instructor. Those desiring to enter this class should bring bandages and blankets for practice work.

Free Rides Offered by Torrance Worker Displaying Sign on Car

Jay H. Ayers, chairman of the plant transportation committee at the Torrance General Petroleum refinery, works irregular hours and therefore cannot arrange a regular "share-the-ride" plan for his car—but he wanted to help out so he devised a plan of his own.

He painted a board, three by 15 inches, white, lettered on one side "Seventh and Pine," and on the other "Seventh and Junipero." He placed it in the front of the car. Whenever he sees persons standing at corners he holds up the board indicating he is bound for those Long Beach points. "Business is good," he said to-



GUNNER—William A. Deane, formerly of Torrance, is a gunner sergeant.

Former Resident In Air Force

Having recently been graduated from the Harlingen Army Gunnery school in Texas, Sergt. William A. Deane now wears the silver wings and stripes at Salt Lake Air Field where he is continuing his Air Force training. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Dale Deane, former residents of Torrance who are now living in Sacramento.

Sergt. Deane joined the Army Sept. 8 and was assigned to a technical school in Mississippi to study ground machine gunning. Later he changed his course to the Army's aerial gunnery school.

"I've been displaying the board daily for about a week and have had a carload each way nearly every trip." Men and women are about equal in responding to his invitation to ride with him.

Asked regarding the regular "share-the-ride" campaign, Ayers said that it is working well, but requires considerable checking to see that drivers and potential passengers get together. Most war industry workers alternate in driving their cars. The passengers without cars, on the average, pay a cent a mile. Ayers doesn't charge for the rides he gives.

Gasoline Ration Problem Stirs Personnel Head

A move to obtain a Torrance "War Area Board" to handle all rationing and other civilian war-time restrictions, pressed by construction firms engaged in erecting the new synthetic rubber plants at the outskirts of Torrance failed to gain approval of Torrance industrial leaders this week and as result the difference in opinion may lead to a rupture of the recently formed war plant personnel directors' group.

The construction men, at a meeting last Friday at Christy's cafe here, complained that the creation of special gasoline ration boards by some of the larger industries in the Wilmington War Area Board, notably Calship, was forcing a situation that worked to the detriment of their employees.

They reported that the big shipbuilding yards, with their own gasoline ration boards (in Calship nearly 900 women are reported employed for about a month at \$6.50 a day) are virtually getting "blanket" approval of their workers' applications for supplemental gas rations.

"Killed in Committee" Local industries and those in the Shoestring strip are forced to go thru regular War Price and Rationing Board channels. Few, if any, of the Wilmington and San Pedro plant workers are being denied extra gasoline, the rubber men asserted.

Samuel Leask, Jr., area director of the War Price and Rationing Administration in Los Angeles, was present at the meeting and he offered to do what he could to set up a "War Area Board" here if one was desired by local plant authorities. A resolution was presented to this effect but later this was "killed in committee," according to R. R. Smith, National Supply Co. personnel head, who is chairman of the group.

"We believe that satisfactory adjustment can be made thru the regular War Rationing Board channels that will not endanger or injure the standing our local plants have with the Office of Price Administration," he said. "If the rubber men and construction firms want to press their case, it will be entirely in their own hands."

Child Care Group Speeds Program For This Area

Wading into the task of securing a comprehensive child care program for this area, the Torrance Community Committee for Child Care met two days last week at the Torrance Labor Temple and elected Hillman Lee chairman, and Rev. H. Wesley Roloff secretary-treasurer. A fact finding committee was appointed.

A resolution was adopted proposing that all local organizations be asked again to participate so that they might be represented and share in long range planning. Mrs. Iona Steele and Mrs. Golda Beight, Women's Auxiliary of United Steelworkers of America members, were appointed to represent the Torrance committee, as well as the C. I. O., at a hearing called by the Office of Civilian Defense at the Hall of Justice in Los Angeles last Friday afternoon.

Presiding at this meeting was Mrs. G. Turner of the Council of Social Welfare Agencies, who outlined a program to include pre-natal and maternity care for mothers and child care from infancy, the pre-school and school age groups, up to and through adolescence.

Questionnaires to supplement data already gathered will be placed into immediate circulation following the conference at the Torrance Elementary school Wednesday when Bernard J. Strand, principal; Mrs. Iona Steele, Women's Auxiliary member, and Mrs. E. C. Prime, P. T. A. representative drafted the forms. If the response to the questionnaires through the usual channels of dissemination proves unsatisfactory then a house-to-house survey will be undertaken at once.

A regular meeting of the Torrance Auxiliary Police will be held next Monday night, Dec. 7, at 7 o'clock in the city council room, according to Police Chief John Stroh.

500 Attend Rites for Principal



THOMAS HUGHES ELSON . . . educator, lecturer, writer and friend of youth

The sudden death last Wednesday morning of Principal Thomas H. Elson of Torrance high school here stirred this community of a sorely needed youth leader and advisor. Only recovered from a serious illness that forced him to take an extended leave from March 23, 1941, he returned to his duties here last September.

His condition was none too good when the new term started but he was determined to direct his students into the war effort as it pertained to their studies.

Mr. Elson was in his office Tuesday and conducted a faculty meeting that morning. In the evening he was taken ill and early the next morning was rushed to St. Vincent's hospital in Los Angeles. He was accompanied in the ambulance by his devoted wife; Mrs. Leitha Sells, his secretary, and two teachers, Miss Florence Behr and Miss Ruth Locke. The Elsons had taken residence at Miss Behr's home at 1730 1/2 Martina ave., at the beginning of the term.

Within an hour after arrival at the hospital, the high school principal, who was 63 years old, had expired. The announcement of his passing was immediately made at the high school.

Born in Indiana More than 500 persons attended the funeral service Monday afternoon at the Little Church Around the Corner in Inglewood. The rites were followed by Masonic ceremonies at the grave in Inglewood Park cemetery.

Having served as principal of San Pedro, Roosevelt, Hamilton and Torrance high schools, Mr. Elson was prominent in administrative circles. He was the first principal of Roosevelt and Hamilton high schools and had served more than 25 years as a Los Angeles school administrator. Well known in committee work and for a number of years chairman of the Curriculum committee; his contribution to the Los Angeles city school system was an outstanding one.

Mr. Elson was born near Valparaiso, Ind., July 23, 1879. He received his Bachelor's degree at the University of Nebraska and his Master's degree at the University of Denver, California's. (Continued on Page 6-A)

War Prompts Changes In Christmas Buying

"It's an ill wind that blows no one good"—and even the war with all its bitter blasts is bringing a closer comradeship between fellow townsmen and women as they work together in Civilian Defense, Red Cross and other war-time activities.

A better relationship is also noted between local residents and local retail stores. Because of gas rationing, lack of adequate public transportation and the busier lives we all are living, shopping out-of-town is rapidly diminishing and more and more buying at home-town stores is being done.

To some, who have never patronized Torrance merchants extensively, it has been a surprise to learn how really up-to-date and well stocked these stores are. Ceiling prices and the Fair Trade Act, which apply equally to local and metropolitan retailers, have removed the last imaginary doubt regarding values and prices.

Torrance stores are prepared to furnish you with everything you desire for Christmas and at prices as low as anywhere. Even a quick glance thru advertisements in this issue will give you an idea of the wide variety of gift items now being featured by local merchants. A more careful reading will disclose many worthwhile gift suggestions and attractive values.

However, it should be remembered that some brands are now unobtainable ANYWHERE, for the simple fact that the factories which formerly made this merchandise are now wholly engaged in turning out war materials. It's a safe bet that if you can't get what you're looking for in Torrance you won't find it elsewhere. In such cases you will be offered alternate articles.

Likewise, the shortage of salespeople is felt in Torrance stores as elsewhere, and you will find Christmas shopping easier if you arrange your trips early in the week and early in the day—and NOW! Late buyers will have difficulty securing satisfactory Christmas merchandise anywhere this year due to the shortage of goods and the greater amount of gift buying due to increased payrolls.

City May Name Plane by Buying War Bond Quota

If you do your part some day the "City of Torrance" will fly over Tokyo and present the compliments of this community in the shape of block-buster bombs . . . if you do your part.

This message to all residents of Torrance comes from General Chairman J. Hugh Sherkey, in charge of the War Bond and Stamp drive, who recently received permission to increase the Torrance quota to \$175,000, to be raised between Nov. 16 and Jan. 31.

This sum will purchase a medium bomber, and will entitle the community to have blazoned upon the bomber's nose the name "City of Torrance."

Special Effort Dec. 7 Only "E" bonds (which bear the largest rate of interest and mature in 10 years) will be considered in the count for the quota, but sales made at the booths in the two local banks, at the postoffice, and those sold by payroll deductions in factories and business enterprises will be included. Torrance has an excellent chance of becoming one of the favored communities which will have its individual bomber in the fight, Sherkey believes.

Next Monday, Pearl Harbor Day, Mrs. Harriett V. Leech, chairman of the Women's division, says there will be stands in front of business houses in the downtown districts where applications for the purchase of bonds will be taken. Messengers will relay the applications to the booths in the banks where the bonds will be issued, and purchasers will receive their bonds with a minimum of delay.

No bonds may be sold on the streets but the applications can be taken while the work of issuing the valuable papers will be done at the regularly established booths.

Next Thursday night, Dec. 10, a meeting will be held at 7:30 o'clock at the council chamber in the city hall to further plans for promoting the bond drive. Any woman of Torrance who would like to assist in this patriotic work are urged to attend.

Last Rites Held Here Today for Fred Spehger

One of the most popular police officers in the Torrance department, a "copper" who never was forced to draw his gun in his nearly nine years he walked his beat, J. Fred Spehger, 53, died today morning at his home, 1307 Portola ave.

The genial, smiling officer was known to hosts of friends here as "Fred" or "Spike" and his last illness, dating from Nov. 20 brought scores of calls daily either to his home or at the police station for information as to his condition. He suffered a stroke that night that paralyzed his right side. When complications developed, his son, Raymond, was sent for and he arrived home Nov. 24 from an Army air force school near Denver.

Mr. and Mrs. Spehger came to Torrance about 1920. He was an oil worker for the C. C. M. O., and Standard Oil before he joined the force Dec. 23, 1933 as a special officer. On Oct. 1, 1934 he was appointed a regular patrolman. His daughter, Marian, was married to Marine Private Gerald Grubb Nov. 7, and "Spike" appeared in excellent health there as he gave the bride away.

Officer Spehger was born June 9, 1889 at Bluffton, Ind. He had been a Californian for 34 years. In addition to his wife, Alice Myrtle; daughter and son, he leaves two sisters, Mrs. L. T. Rogers of Fullerton and Mrs. J. M. Bower of Bluffton, and two brothers, Allen of Poneto, Ind., and John of Bluffton. The funeral service was held this afternoon at Stone and Myers' chapel with Rev. H. Wesley Roloff officiating. Masonic rites were conducted at the grave at Roosevelt Memorial park.

Alcoa Subsidizes Bus Service for Workers

Approval of a contract between the city and the Aluminum Corp. of America whereby the latter agrees to pay a \$600 monthly subsidy to the city for extra bus service for its employees was given by the city council Nov. 24.

Pinball License Of \$180 Yearly Defeated 3 to 2

"By a three-to-two vote, Councilman Nick Cucci's proposed ordinance to license pinball, marble, "claw" and other "games of skill" at a fee of \$180 per year each was defeated after its first reading Nov. 24. After the vote, which followed a prolonged discussion of the measure which has periodically been brought up here for many years, Cucci declared he would re-draft his law to lower the license fee. He did not indicate what his new tax would be.



SPEAKER—City Attorney J. E. McCall will address municipal law officers in New York City.

Attorney to Urge Cancellation of Pre-War Pacts

The result of several months' research will be presented to members of the National Institute of Municipal Law Officers meeting in convention at New York City Dec. 3 by City Attorney John E. McCall, who is regional vice president of that organization. He will speak Dec. 3 on "Municipal Contracts and Wartime Control," a subject which graphically illustrates the effect of war and Federal legislation on various improvement contracts let by states, counties and cities.

McCall left last Friday night to attend the convention which will be held Dec. 2-4 at the Commodore Hotel. He expects to return about Dec. 15. His paper will report how millions of dollars are now "frozen" in existing contracts which cannot be carried out because of shortage of materials, priorities or other Federal restrictions and urge legislation to cancel these contracts.

"Federal legislation is necessary," he said, "to relieve the states, counties and cities of these 'frozen' contracts. If they could be cancelled then the various governmental units could plan now for post-war improvements which would do a great deal toward cushioning the impact of peacetime economy after the tremendous spending made necessary by the war."

James Wilkes, 91 Succumbs Here

All for only about a week, James Wilkes, 91, father of James R. Wilkes of 2463 Carson st., died last Sunday afternoon. The funeral service was conducted yesterday at Stone and Myers' chapel by Rev. Paul M. Wheeler, vicar of St. Andrew's Episcopal church. The body will be sent to Corning, N. Y., Mr. Wilkes' former home, for interment later.

In addition to his son, whose devotion to his father was well-known here, Mr. Wilkes leaves a sister, Mrs. Sarah Gaylord, and a nephew, Frederick Gaylord of Washington, D. C., and three grandchildren, James Frederick Nancy Jane and Doris Jean of this city.

Mr. Wilkes was born in Corning June 7, 1851. He was a machinist, learning his trade at the Payne Engine Works in that city and was employed by the American-La France Fire Engine Co., from 1908 until 1917, when he retired. He came to Torrance in July 1926 and lived at 727 Sartori ave. He returned to Blossburg, Pa., in 1933 and after the death of his wife, Mrs. Phebe James Wilkes in 1936 came back to live with his son here.

VISITING HERE

Mrs. George D. Watson of Temple City and formerly of Torrance has been visiting relatives and friends here this week.

Lack of Budget Plagues Council

Altho they did not indicate when they would adopt one, the fact that the city is operating without a municipal budget rose up Nov. 24 to plague members of the city council. The usual custom followed by sixth-class cities has been to fix a budget prior to adopting tax rates—and the 1942-43 levy was adopted here Aug. 31.

Councilman Nick Cucci said: "It's about time for a budget report to see how we are coming with our expenditures. When can we get a report?" he asked City Clerk A. H. Bartlett.

"I can give you a breakdown report sometime next week," the clerk replied.

"Why so long?" insisted Cucci. "We've never really had a budget—you have never adopted one," Bartlett told him. "But I can give a breakdown report on expenditures from July to October."

Asked about the lack of a budget after the session, Clerk Bartlett told The Herald that he had prepared a number of the financial statements, that they had been considered by the council in private sessions but none had ever been adopted here.