PERCY H. BYRNS DIES IN WASHINGTON, D. C.

Percy H. Byrns, who was executive secretary of St. Louis Chapter, American Red Cross, for 24 years before he entered the service of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration last September, died Dec. 2 in Washington of pneumonia. Death occurred in Doctors' Hospital. Burial was in Oak Hill Cemetery, Kirkwood, Mo.

Byrns was here a few weeks ago for his wife's funeral. At that time he said he was learning the Polish language, indicating that he was to be sent to Poland by UNRRA. He was in his early fifties, and appeared to be in good health at that time.

His service in St. Louis social work included the relief crisis of the depression in the early 1930s, and several disasters in the St. Louis and southwestern areas, including the 1927 tornado, and Mississippi and Missouri River floods.

In 1936 he was co-ordinator of the Municipal Relief Administration. He spoke to social workers on the requirements of the crisis, and engaged in some controversies with city officials over budgeting of relief activities.

He was former chairman of St. Louis Chapter American Association of Social workers.

The late Gilbert Chesterton, in his excellent book on Charles Dickens, described our final destination as an ultimate inn... "where we shall drink again from the great flagons in the tavern at the end of the world."

The tavern at the end of the world! Pat and I always liked that picture by Chesterton. It's a heart-warming thought; a cheerful inn with its lighted windows shining through the wind-swept darkness and old friends waiting by the fire. I can imagine Monte Luecking, Dick Knox, George Delany and the rest of the gang rushing to greet Pat as he came in out of the night. It must have been a happy reunion. For you see it had been a long time since last they heard him recite "Coward Jake" or a favorite verse from the "Barrel Organ".

"And then the troubadour begins to fill the golden street, 
In the city when the sun sinks low; 
And in all the gaudy busses there are scores of weary feet 
Marking time, sweet time, with a dull mechanic beat, 
And a thousand hearts are plunging to a love they'll never meet, 
Through the meadows of the sunset, through the poppies and the wheat, 
In the land where the dead dreams go."

Carry on, Pat. A bientot.
Pat realized that he was dying and one of his last requests was that an old friend, the Rt. Rev. Msgr. John Butler of St. Louis, conduct the funeral service. In closing his eulogy Msgr. Butler summed up the qualities that endeared Pat to all who knew him. I quote:

"Keen, witty, and entertaining, he brought sunshine to many a gathering. He was broad-minded, fair, and considerate of the views of others even if he disagreed with their views. His loyalty, pleasing personality, and ability to make and keep friends were, in my opinion, outstanding traits. I know, because I knew Pat so well, that self-seeking never stained his life. That, I think, accounts for the fact that those who knew him intimately loved him, and that is the reason that in all walks of life there are so many friends who mourn his loss."

Hello everybody! This is your delinquent Editor who has decided to start the New Year by cluttering your mail box with a long overdue issue of the Rouen Post. Every day since August I have been saying to myself, "Tomorrow I must get busy on another four page message to my former comrades of the Base." Then another drawing would enter my life and if I am interested in dining well and with regularity it is essential that I meet deadlines for drawings ordered by trusting clients. Mind you I'm not criticising the good people who send me work — I'd hate them if they didn't — but they have almost estranged me from my favorite hobby — the Rouen Post. I tried to talk cousin Irl Trickey into taking over the editorship for a few issues but Irl has troubles enough of his own. Irl, for many months a member of the fire department at the Bush Sulzer plant, has been transferred to other duties and the loss of the dashing fire fighter's uniform in which he was wont to parade along Olive street in his leisure hours has darkened the horizon of the once gregarious swamp angel. "I ain't in the humor to edit a paper," he explained. "Since they took my uniform with them nice brass buttons I ain't fit company for man or beast. Why don't you offer the job to Jablonsky. He's always sounding off. It'd be right down his alley."

Those who failed to attend the Armistice Day meeting at the Chesterfield home of Dr. Joseph Larimore missed the outstanding party of the year. The guests arrived early and stayed late in the charming rustic lodge where cheery log fires, gracious hospitality and a lot of old familiar faces combined to dispel the chill of a gray November afternoon and evening. So congenial was the atmosphere that even Charley Jablonsky succumbed: Bill Engel claims he saw the old top-sergeant smile twice but Justin Jackson insists that Engel revolved so rapidly from room to room most of the time that his value as an observer was highly questionable.

Following a dinner featuring barbecued pig, sweet potatoes, and corn on the cob, Ritchey Williams, retiring commander of Rouen Post No. 242, was presented with the traditional diamond pin of a past commander. The presentation was made by past-commander Marvin Hamilton who, in a short talk for Ham, congratulated Ritchey on his long service as finance officer and successful year as commander. Gordon Kimbrel, newly elected leader of Rouen Post, followed Hamilton with an expression of appreciation to Dr. and Mrs. Larimore for a memorable party.

Bill Reeves came over from Belleville but his gargantuan pal Horace Neely failed to show. The Judge usually attends the Armistice party and the veterans missed his tenor rendition of "Danny Boy," and the nostalgic ballad, "The Bum and the Farmer's Son." Forney Dixon, official bartender was voted man of the year for his success in supplying cigarettes. Forney set out from home empty handed Saturday morning and reported for duty in the afternoon with at least six cartoons of popular brands. To one, like this writer, who does well to buy two packs a day Forneys performance was astounding.
The guests mindful of the threatened shortage of turkeys for Thanksgiving Day gazed long and avidly at a hillside swarming with plump hens and gobblers raised by Dr. Larimore, or rather, Mrs. Larimore. The sight of over three hundred corn-fed birds ready for market proved too much for Williard McQuoid who drooled openly and unashamed.

Lewis Garner and Wrennie (Singem) Steele were among the early arrivals. Steele is a millinery jobber covering St. Louis and Southern Illinois. Garner, now with Wolfram Cleaning and Dyeing Co., was a millinery salesman for 12 years until a glandular ailment sent him to the Veteran’s Hospital for a protracted stay. Later he was stricken with a circulatory disorder of the lower limbs for which he is still taking treatments. Garner claims the Unit record for time spent in the clink in General Hospital 12 at Rouen. “Sergeant Art Schanuel was my nemesis,” recalls Lew. “Every time our paths crossed I wound up in the guardhouse.”

Walking along Olive street the afternoon of Halloween I almost bumped into Earl Hursey who was gazing thoughtfully at a display of jack-o-lanterns against a background of corn shocks in a window of Boyd’s clothing store. Earl pointed toward the grinning pumpkins. “That one in the center,” he said, “the one with the biggest mouth, reminds me of old windy Bowman. Every time I see Elmer on the East Side he’s putting on a monologue in either the Century Cigar store or Mike’s barber shop. He’s the Forney Dixon of Collinsville avenue.”

Earl is gradually recovering from an attack of arthritis that has kept him from his office at Swift and Company since last March. He still plans on eventually devoting full time to his farm on the outskirts of East St. Louis, a prospect which has the enthusiastic approval of Bowman. “Hursey belongs on a farm,” said Pink the other day. “He’s far more at home in a barn than a drawing room.”

Arshav Nushan, one of our most reliable news sources, called the other day, to announce that Dr. Clarence Koch, Little Rock orthodontist, is the father of a baby boy... Dr. Hugh McCullough has added his name to the roster of Rouen Post No. 242. We welcome the Doctor as a fellow Legionnaire and hope he will find time to attend an occasional meeting... Among the Christmas cards that arrived at our desk were greetings from Cal Tilton in Los Angeles, Toby Dunville in Minneapolis, and Col. Lee D. Cady, commander of the 21st General Hospital now on duty in France. Marvin Hamilton has promised to bring in a letter from Col. Cady in which the latter tells of finally receiving the jukebox which, through error, fell into the hands of the St. Louis U. outfit instead of 21st General.

Every now and then we meet Tom Sheedy at luncheon in the DeSoto Hotel bar. Tom, considerably stouter than in the days when he was chaplain of Rouen Post, has apparently scratched the Post meetings from his list of social activities. He hasn’t been around in several years.

Spencer Allen, former walking partner of lance-corporal Barker, was host to Pink Bowman, Ritchey Williams and your Editor at a dinner in a downtown club early last November. After stowing away a goodly store of rations we retired to the club lounge and refought the battle of Rouen until after midnight. Allen, who was in St. Louis on a brief visit, is chairman of an important State salvage committee in Cincinnati where he has lived for many years. Bowman believes that if the committee wants to test its efficiency it should attempt to salvage Allen. “If it can do that it rates national acclaim,” said Elmer.
MEMOIRS OF A WORLD WAR NURSE
By Retta Snyder

Rouen, June 6th, 1918

The days fly by and we are busy getting ready for the big celebration on the 12th. How we do celebrate! But we have to do something, you know. For months Dr. Proetz has been coaching the boys for a circus. The nurses are to give a May-pole dance. It seemed hopeless at first but last night we got all the steps and music together.

Cordelia Ranz designed our dresses. White gauze from the Red Cross, shortwaisted, shirred on the shoulder, V neck, flowing sleeves, gathered skirt twelve inches from the ground. Cordelia is making huge butterflies to tack on our backs. They are in pastel shades and we will wear shoes and belts of the same shade. Mine is green and my partner's gold. They will be lovely though amateurish.

My evenings are so full of practice that I have to write on duty! Up to three o'clock I rushed around but everything is done now until the other Sister comes on at 4:30. I wish I could tell you some of the things the Americans are doing. Whoop la! I'm perfectly wild to get into the A.E.F. though the American hospitals are doing nothing as yet. But the Americans in France are doing a great deal that I doubt is being published. Dr. Abbott is back from a stay in Southern France and various places. His stories of the things he saw certainly put new life into our flagging spirits.

Brigadier-General Mechie died on his way to Paris and the body was taken off the train at Rouen and buried from this hospital. The casket was placed on a platform under a marque top on the green in front of the grandstands and four guards stood at attention until it was taken away. The procession assembled on the green and we went out to watch. Eight sergeants, four of No. 12 and four from No. 9 were the pall-bearers. While the coffin was being placed in the gun-wagon a band played "Nearer My God To Thee."

In the procession an English band came first. Then a French soldier on horseback. Four horses drew the gun-wagon with a French soldier on the back of each left side horse. The sergeants walked on either side of the wagon. Two padres, one from Cleveland and ours walked behind the wagon.

Following them came the American officers of Cleveland and St. Louis followed by British, French and Belgian officers. The enlisted men of both hospitals followed them and in turn were followed by a large company of French soldiers in full uniform, packs, tin hats, and all. Their blue uniforms are very attractive and these all wore new ones. Then came a company of English soldiers marching with their guns barrel down. They were followed by the Mayor of Rouen, the American counsel in Rouen and other notables in high silk hats and swallow-tails. General Ireland was here and others whom we do not know.

At the cemetery the French and British stood at attention outside. Around the grave were gathered two more companies, one English and one of Jocks in kilts. They fired the last salute and it was tremendous. Usually there are four guns but this time there were sixty or more.

Let me today do something that shall take
A little sadness from the world's vast store;
And may I be so favored as to make
Of joy's too scanty sum a little more.

Let me tonight look back across the span
'Twixt dawn and dark, and to my conscience say,
Because of some good deed to beast or man, Anonymous
(The world is better that I lived today.) (from Sunshine Magazine)