IN MEMORIAM

"For some we loved, the loveliest and the best
That from his vintage rolling Time hath pressed,
Have drunk their cup a round or two before
And one by one crept silently to rest."

On this Memorial Day of 1951 our thoughts harken back to the days of 1917-1918...to Humphrey Evatt who was the first member of Base Hospital Unit 21 to die in the service of his country...and to Frank Pitt who only recently passed away.

Between Evatt and Pitt many names are recorded in the historic archives of B.H. 21...of those who served and since have died...there are famous names and the names of many others of lesser fame each of whom served with distinction...And there are the men and women of the 21st General who gave their lives during World War II and those who have since passed from this earth...each of whom did his or her share to help preserve our democratic way of life...AND THE ENDURING PEACE WE HAVE YET TO FIND.

For these and those who are now defending us all over the world--

LET US PRAY

Dear God, who in thy mercy heareth the prayers of sinners, pour forth, we beseech thee, all grace and blessing upon our country and its citizens. We pray for all our soldiers...for all who defend us in ships, whether on the seas or in the skies...for all who are suffering the hardships and sorrows of war.

Enlighten our minds with thy wisdom, inflame our hearts with thy love of mankind, and grant us the inspiration that will make us capable instruments in establishing a just and enduring peace. Bring us all after the troubles of this Life in the haven of everlasting Peace, and reunite us all forever, O God, in the Glory of Thy Heavenly Kingdom. Amen

* * *

FRANK H. PITT S DIES

As we were preparing a story for the NEWS-LETTER anent the death of Frank Pitts, we were interrupted by a letter from the wife of this fine soldier. Because Frank Pitt never sought the limelight, our information on his life since our War days was strictly negative. What we might have written would have been just words, shallow words, wholly inadequate words--until we received the letter from Mrs. Pitt.

The letter bestirred our emotions and proved to us how wholly inadequate we might have been. We cannot better serve the memory of our departed contemporary than by using Mrs. Pitt's letter just as it came to us:

Tulsa, Oklahoma
May 15, 1951

Jules V. Silberberg
Justin J. Jackson
Tom L. Sheedy
Forney F. Dixon
Arthur E. Melville
Gordon, Shorty, Kimbrel
Members of Base Hospital 21
and Rouen Post 242.

Comrades of My Husband, Pvt. Pitt:

There are not words to express my deep appreciation for the kindness extended to me and my son in our great loss of our DEAR LOVED ONE.

Frank had been very ill for two years with a heart ailment and had suffered more than any one will ever know.

His going has left such an empty vacant
spot in our hearts, as he was a wonderful husband and Father. He had worlds of friends and was loved by all.

Yes, he often spoke of his "Buddies" and some of the "little incidents" that drew each of you together as brothers in the Mobile #4.

I know it would have made Frank happy to know that Carl Taylor and Paul Corrubia attended his last rites to bid him "Farewell." Carl, especially was so near to him.

Again allow me to say "Thanks."

IN MEMORY OF PRIVATE PITT
Mrs. Frank H. Pitt

We mourn with Mrs. Pitt and the son. Partings are sad but there must be some recompense from the knowledge of having shared the life of Frank Pitt.

To the ever-growing list of Base Hospital 21 members who have departed this earth, we now add the name of "Private Pitt," as Frank was affectionately known to his contemporaries.

* * *

DR. ARTHUR PROETZ WINS HIGHEST AWARD IN LARYNGOLOGY FIELD

Award of the world's highest honor in the field of laryngology, the De Roaldes Gold Medal, to Dr. A. W. Proetz, widely known St. Louis ear, nose and throat specialist, was recently announced. Dr. Proetz is a former B.H. 21, World War I member.

The award, sponsored by the American Laryngological Association, has been made six times previously since its establishment in 1907. It is made, according to the citation which accompanies it, "in special recognition of merit and achievement in teaching, authorship and research.

Dr. Proetz is professor of clinical otolaryngology at Washington University and is author of several standard textbooks on the physiology of the nose. He lives in St. Louis.

* * *

"SALVAGE" SURGERY.

"Salvage" surgery, which gives new hope for persons otherwise doomed by either advanced cancer of the rectum or cancer of the cervix which has returned after X-ray or radium treatment, was described at a recent meeting of the St. Louis Medical Society.

Dr. Eugene Bricker, collaborating with Dr. John Modlin, Chief of surgery at Ellis Fischel State Cancer Hospital, of Missouri, delivered a paper on the subject of "previously hopeless cases of cancer."

Both Drs. Bricker and Modlin were members of the 21st General Hospital Unit, World War II, and both are associated with instruction in clinical surgery at Washington University.

* * *

A VISIT WITH J. SPENCER ALLEN

A couple of weeks ago your scribe was in Cincinnati on business. At the end of the day, time was called on all other activities for an evening with one of B.H. 21's most colorful characters, Spencer "Spindly" Allen.

The former loquacious and one of B.H. 21's most reactionary persons is not the Allen we knew at Rouen. No longer is he willing to challenge all comers physically or verbally. Spence is suffering from an ailment which physicians have not been able to correct. He inhales properly but the exhalation processes do not function as they should.

Instead of 36 holes of golf as of yester-year, now a mere six completely exhausts him. His appetite is greatly impaired so Spence is no longer a robust 120 pounds but a mere 110.

Ailment or not J. Spencer is the same genial and generous host. Fortified with generous potions of some Kentucky's famous dew, we enjoyed an excellent dinner at the Maketaw Club. After dinner we moved to the palatial home of the Allen's in an exclusive section of Cincinnati. There we met Mrs. Allen and the Allen's youngest daughter--there are two other girls, both away at college.

No evening with Allen could be complete without repetition of stories about Elmer "Pink" Bowman and his unquenchable appetite for "eating tobacco." Some of these tales obviously were new to Mrs. Allen. Nevertheless, we noticed that she took infrequent glances at the television, which had a wrestling match showing. When a lady of Mrs. Allen's intellectual attainments has to resort to such low form of entertainment to divert her thoughts from Spencer's stories, a new low must have been reached.
Mr. Allen has been a successful business man, as well as a civic leader. He is vice-president of the Fox Paper Company of Lockland, Ohio.

It was a delightful evening and we hope we shall be able to repeat it soon again. We expect to be in Cincinnati more frequently in the future.

THE ROUEN POST TAKES A COUPLE OF BOWS

When we reprinted the item from one of our St. Louis papers about the Missouri State Bonus for Veterans of World War I, we had no idea that we would receive any answers. One letter has been quoted and here are two more:

West Palm Beach, Florida

Dear Bill: Will appreciate your sending me a form to apply for the Missouri State Bonus. I will write and send in the form and admit I do not ever remember getting a state bonus, so if I did they can advise me.

Had a nice letter from Spencer Allen and Horace Barker after you put addresses in the News and I wrote a card or two.

Thanks so much for your help and trust both Engels are back on the active list again.

Best regards to the old gang. Have never had the pleasure of meeting any of the new 'young' outfit.

Sincerely, C. J. Fox

17413 Bradgate Ave., Cleveland, O.

Dear Bill: Read with interest Olive Flynn's inquiry regarding the Missouri State Bonus. I believe I am one of the laggards, at least, I don't remember ever getting one.

So will you please send me an application blank and I will apply for it. We can't leave that $15,000.00 idle, can we?

So glad to read all of the little messages from B.H. 21 in the last News-Letter. I still think it would be a good idea to charge a subscription price to keep out of the red.

Our family will meander up to Toronto next week to be at Al Jr.'s wedding on June 2nd. At last I'll be a "Mother-in-law." Hope to be a good one, at least try.

Hope both you and Mrs. Engel have regained your health. Thanks for taking care of this for me.

One of the old gang,

Mrs. Marie Kemmeyer Stockhaus

Ed.'s note: If none of the three have not filed previously there is $250.00 for each of them, if we remember correctly. Even with Truman dollars it still is a tidy sum.

For the second bow the News-Letter refers you to the letter from "Rabbi" Fox which mentions having received letters from Spencer Allen and Horace Barker.

We understand, through the underground, that there has been some criticism of the publication of names and addresses of former members of both the units 21 that no one is interested . . . and a waste of funds.

Your attention is directed to the masthead of the paper which includes: "Devoted to the interests of the members of B.H. 21 World War I and the 21st Gen. Hosp. World War II." That we, thru the publication of names and addresses of B.H. 21 members, have furnished the material for an interchange of communications between three of the members; all this after thirty-three years. We believe this is a tribute to our foresight in having followed the suggestion of a 21st General member. We shall try to use some in this issue . . . despite our critics.

LETTERS

Dear Justin: Sorry I could not make the recent meeting.

I don't believe I really owe the organization anything, but it seemed like it was time for a contribution to the Rouen Post.

357 Fullerton Plway, Chicago 14, Ill.

Dear Mr. Jackson: Enclosed you will find a check for a renewal of my membership in the Rouen Post.

I did not receive the copies of the Rouen Post which you mailed to my old address as the folks at home were very lax in forwarding my mail and I was not aware of it at the time.

Received your latest copy of the Post for which I am very grateful and truly enjoyed reading it. Am looking forward to future issues. Thank you very much for the kindness. IRENE P. STEPLYK
Dear Mr. Jackson: Enclosed is my late contribution to the welfare of the Rouen Post. I've been receiving the interesting News-Letter and have had great pleasure reading about the old bunch. It's a good little paper. Please tell Bill Engel to keep my name on the mailing list.

EDWARD V. SAVAGE

* * * * *

HE HAS NOT CHANGED A BIT

A letter from Dr. Allan Gilbert of B.H. 21 just arrived this morning even though it was written on May 1, 1951. We quote:

Dear Bill: The arrival of the News-Letter reminds me that Lasater, I'eyept Phillip I think, was here in Fayetteville (Arkansas) last Saturday April 23th: He called my home and was told that I was at the American Legion Hut. We were putting on our annual Apple Blossom Time 40/8 Spring Wreck. I don't know whether he called there or not. In any event I missed him and was greatly disappointed. I did not know of his visit here until next morning and then couldn't locate him at any of the hotels. Just want you to let him know I appreciate his phone call and hope that any one coming this way will stop over and see me. I don't know Lasater's address or I would drop him a note.

Spring has come, the hills are beautiful, fishing will soon be good and I'll never be too busy to take time off to entertain any of the gang that pass this way.

Yours, ALLAN

P. S. I find this note filed away in a history folder where it has been resting a month. The patient just came in today. Sure thought it had gone. Will send it along anyway to get word to Lasater.

Too bad about Ed Kohn. I remember trying to help him service connect a low back pain which he said developed carrying stretchers. At least I recall getting him assigned to the Post Office.

No, the guy hasn't changed a bit. We presume the patient's history was filed under Lasater. For the enlightenment of Dr. Gilbert, the full name is "Jesse M. Lasater," and the address, Naples, Texas.

Being one of its leading citizens and its most prominent barrister, the citizen of Naples does not require a local address; in fact, according to King, our son, who visited Jesse in Naples a few years ago, a letter addressed to northeast Texas would reach him.

We are certain had the amiable Allan Gilbert received the message from Jesse Lasater he would have responded. There is no more pleasant guy in the world and none who has a finer and more sensitive feeling for the members of B.H.21. Despite his shortcomings, we'll not trade him for dozens of others of B.H. 21. Dr. Allan Gilbert is good company anywhere.

We salute a great chap, whose loyalty to service men knows no bounds, and we daresay Jesse Lasater was the loser by not having pursued his efforts in locating Allan. Sad, but true, he may have found it necessary to go thru a lot of dark alleys.

* * * * *

Reprinted from St. Louis Globe-Democrat

10 MONTHS IN KOREA IS A LONG TIME

Lt. Jules Silberberg, a World War II member of Rouen Post 242, began Memorial Day on his knees in church and he wishes more of us had done the same. For he is convinced the United States is fighting for its survival in Asia.

Fresh from the smell of death and gunpowder, this Korean veteran thinks that the home-front is taking the shooting war too lightly and he is in a position to know.

The 26-year old officer was the first St. Louisian to return here under the Army's rotation plan. Since then, 12 more have arrived among the 1903 officers and men returned under the same program.

Silberberg, a regular Army officer, was among the first American foot soldiers to trade shots with the Red Korean invaders. He is now spending a well-earned leave at home after almost 10 unbroken months of combat.

* * *

When the war broke out he was a member of the 24th Division. This was Maj. Gen. William F. Dean's game but, strength
team of trouble shooters.

From Japan it was rushed into battle in the earliest days of the Korean war. Then it fought a bloody rear-guard action against overwhelming numbers. It is still in this Asiatic cock-pit, chasing the Chinese Communists back across the Thirty-eighth parallel. On the hot July afternoon, when Silberberg's 19th Regiment left from an unnamed Japanese port of embarkation, no one thought of this possibility.

"So far as we were concerned, it was a two-week war," he recalls, "something like sending in a riot squad to break up a mob.

We were anxious to get there. Many thought the Koreans would run when they saw Americans in the line."

* * *

The spectators, on hand to wave farewell when the troops embarked, were apparently less optimistic. Lining the dock were a knot of American women and children, wives and off-spring of some of the men about to depart.

Some wept, others bravely cheered, as the troops disappeared into the transport a rusty, ugly LST. As the crew hauled in the last mooring hawser, however, a 5-year-old boy broke from the crowd and ran towards the ship.

"Come back, daddy, jump," he pleaded as the vessel backed into open water.

The boy's father, a Maj. Sowell, did come back, Silberberg says, but many others didn't. He is one of the few line officers in his regiment still alive.

* * *

Silberberg made it home by consistently cheating the stretcher-bearers. In combat, he was never farther from the front than division headquarters. Much of the time he spent as leader of an intelligence and reconnaissance platoon. This kind of an outfit does most of its work in advance of its own front lines, or behind the enemy's.

In World War II, the Army estimated the average life span of Lieutenants engaged in this kind of activity.

On the battlefield it was said to be about three and a half minutes.

* * *

The States amaze this veteran who has accumulated several cons of borrowed time. Few people seem to be aware of what a bitter struggle for survival is going on across the Pacific.

His own 24th Division was never pulled out of the line for rest or recuperation. During the see-saw battles up and down the Korean peninsula, it fought almost daily.

This was bad enough when its chief enemy was the North Korean, an elusive, wiry little ridge-runner "who could sprint up a hill with an A-frame on his back."

This was a great help in the kind of a country they were fighting in. "All the time I was there, I saw only two paved roads. Neither one of them ran more than 10 or 20 miles."

* * *

When the Chinese entered the war, in November, 1950, the Twenty-fourth ran into even tougher hombres.

"I often had heard that the Chinese were drugged. I thought so myself at first, but I know better now. They are just well-disciplined troops. They will take heavy losses to reach an objective, not because they are hopped up but because they have been ordered to," he says with a professional soldier's respect for an able foe man.

The Chinese gave the St. Louisian some bad moments. "We were surrounded and cut off in November, and then again on New Year's Day.

The Chinese came on foot, on horseback, and on camels. One guy swore that they used the camels as portable gun platforms. Every time this one hump-back knelt, he said its rider fired off a mortar."

* * *

In addition to their odd forms of transport, "the Chinese dig in very differently. Their fox-holes are very small at the top, and then widen out underground."

"It looks like they hatched in these burrows and pop up through the narrow openings like locusts."

Silberberg recalls in this connection one grimly humorous encounter. "A sergeant in the platoon lobbed a hand grenade into one of these Chinese fox-holes. Almost before you know it, it came back again like a bowling ball that's returned to you on the runway.
"The Chinese must have caught it on the fly and thrown it right back out. We had to scramble fast to duck our own ammunition."

* * * 

Instead of lobbing hand grenades in Korea, Silberberg came within a hair's breadth of chopping logic in Switzerland.

In 1948 this C.B.C. High graduate was weighing two interesting alternatives. He had just finished several years at Washington University, and was debating whether to enter the Army or a Swiss University at Fribourg.

The one offered a military career, which he had learned to like as a Navy blue-jacket during World War II. The other offered the study of philosophy, to which he was addicted.

An Army offer of a direct commission turned the scales. He signed up that year, and was sent to Japan in 1949, a few months before the North Koreans attacked the southern republic last June 25th.

* * * *

A six-footer, who weighs about 225 pounds, Silberberg is the oldest son in a family of three boys and two girls.

His dad, J. V. Silberberg, is a past commander of Rouen Post 242. The older Silberberg spent nearly two years in France with Base Hospital 21.

Another son served three years as a paratrooper with the Eleventh Airborne Division. Like Jules Silberberg, he had the same divided allegiance between a contemplative life and that of a professional soldier. In his case the camp lost out to the cloister. Shortly after discharge, he entered a Trappist monastery.

The youngest boy, Gene, was a top-flight amateur soccer player. "He kicked with the Schumachers and the Raffertya, and was on a local Olympic tryout squad when he was 17," his older brother relates.

He's now at St. Benedict's College in Atchison, Kansas. He should have a distinguished career if his brothers are any criterion, wearing Khaki or a clergyman's collar.

* * * 

Ed's Note: We are proud to reprint this story and to have both the father and the son as members of Rouen Post 242. Many of you who attended the reunions in 1949, no doubt, met the handsome Lieutenant.

* * * 

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** ** ** **

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** **

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