PMM BLOG ARCHIVE

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WWII Weekly Front Pages, The Morning News, Danville, PA

WWII Weekly Front Pages

8 April – 14 April 1945

The Morning News, Danville, PA

The world suffers a deep loss.



WESTERN EUROPE

A great Allied skyborne army parachuted into the northern Netherlands to smother the large network of rail lines and roads the Germans had been counting on for their getaway. Late dispatches said the operation was

meeting unqualified success. To make the German plight worse, Canadian spearheads had pushed 23 miles across the wait of Holland to within nine miles of the Zuider Zee.

The American Ninth Army was only seven miles from Hannover in the south, but one armored division had shot past the city to a point only 132 miles west of Berlin. General Patton's Third Army once again was setting the pace, striking forward in a renewed drive through the central Reich, pushing forward on a 50 mile front east and southeast of Muelhausen. The Army outran itself last week; tanks had to wait for four days until supplies caught up. By the end of the week a strict security blackout had stopped the news of any further advances. By the end of the week the Americans had reached the Elbe River, the last natural obstacle before Berlin, and were 60 miles west of the German capital. The Second Armored Division, who called themselves the "Hell on Wheels" division, had achieved the most spectacular tank advance of the war, all but sprouting wings in their 55 mile surge in one day.

PACIFIC/ASIA

On Monday, troops on the southern Okinawa front pressed forward yard by yard, driving toward the capital city of Naha. Infantrymen were believed to be within two miles of the city at the west coast end of their attack line. Fighting in the south was becoming more and more intensified as retreating Japanese troops dug into fortified caves and fought from clifftops. In the north, leathernecks made their advance with little opposition. Marine fighters had already started using captured airbases on Okinawa. Midweek it was reported that Marines had seized a strategically important bay, spacious enough to accommodate large ships. It had been used by the Japanese as a naval base and a submarine port.

Marines were killing Japanese on Okinawa at a rate of eleven to one in what was expected to turn out to be the toughest fight of the Pacific war. Admiral Nimitz said that 432 Americans had been killed by Monday night, and 5,009 Japanese had been counted. Unquestionably, many more had been killed since.

EASTERN FRONT

Russian troops had captured Konigsburg, the capital of East Prussia. The city fell after a two-day assault. Along with the city, the Russians had captured 42,000 Nazi soldiers.

Another drive on Berlin was reported to be shaping up on the Eastern Front. German radio said that Russians on the Oder River bridgehead were preparing to move the last 30 miles to the Nazi capital, but Moscow was silent on the reported action east of Berlin. The nightly Soviet communique confined itself to Vienna, where the Nazis had blown up historic museums and monuments and left the city in flames. The Soviets had driven almost two miles inside the capital to win control of the city center. Among the buildings captured were the town hall and Austrian parliament. The Germans were still holding out in the northern part of Vienna, an area comprising about one third of the city.

HOME FRONT

The chief of artillery of the Philadelphia Army Ordnance District revealed to employees that the production of 60mm trench mortars would be almost trebled, from 350 to 1,000 a month. The increase was allocated to the Danville plant because of the fine production record set by the facility and the excellent quality of the workmanship of the finished product.

Two veterans of many battles were to visit war plants in Danville in the interest of the Seventh War Loan which was taking shape over the nation. The men, who were to speak at two plants, were chosen because of their outstanding service records. They were to present a message that would stress the need to fund the Loan at a time when the nation desperately needs the support.

The US Senate passed and sent to the White House an act to extend lend-lease until the end of June, 1956. The action came by unanimous voice vote.

State municipalities had official permission to sound air raid sirens to signal the end of the war in Europe. The State Defense Council said the signals should be distinctive to not be confused with air raid signals. Philadelphia and other cities had already announced plans to sound the sirens on V-E Day.

On 12 April Franklin Delano Roosevelt passed away due to a cerebral hemorrhage at Warm Springs, Georgia. In a simple solemn ceremony in the cabinet room of the White House, Vice President Harry Truman took the oath of office to become the 32nd president of the United States. He promised to carry out the policies and plans of FDR. Danville was to observe three hours of tribute to the late president; all public activity would cease between two and five o'clock. War plants would continue to work during the period.

(Photo courtesy newspapers.com, Danville Morning News)