













# NEWS FROM HOME Yule Eve Fires Take 23 Lives In Four States

## New York Hotel Is Razed; Property Damage Big In New Jersey

NEW YORK, Dec. 27 (AP)—At least 21 people were killed and many injured in a number of fires which swept the nation on Christmas Eve.  
The most serious occurred in New York, where 17 men lost their lives in a fire which destroyed a five-story hotel.  
Two elderly men died in a blaze in a Minneapolis apartment and one person died and many were injured in a fire in a Philadelphia apartment.  
Property was damaged widely at Wildwood, N.J., where flames consumed two hotels, approximately 25 shops, three theaters and an amusement pier. One fireman died from a heart attack while fighting the pier blaze.

### Cocktails Kill 5

NEW ORLEANS, Dec. 27—Home-made cocktails called "detrails" brought death to five men at a Christmas party here. Dr. John G. Hamilton, of the Charity Hospital staff, said that members of the victims' families told him the cocktails were made of a paint remover ingredient, sugar and two types of wine.

### Jersey Forest Fire Halted

CHATSWORTH, N.J., Dec. 27—New Jersey's worst forest fire since last spring was brought under control after destroying more than 1,300 acres of woodland southwest of this Burlington County village. Marines joined civilian firefighters in saving the hamlets of Sandy Ridge and Friendship in a two-day battle against the flames.

### Power Plants on Rails

WASHINGTON, Dec. 27—The War Department has contracted for ten mobile power plants to move into captured towns behind the troops and furnish electricity. Each will include eight railway cars and carry a generating plant with 5,000-kilowatt capacity, needing only coal and water to operate.

### Prison Scandal Charged

RICHMOND, Mo., Dec. 27—A Grand Jury report charged that men prisoners in the Ray County jail here were permitted to go into the women's quarters in the jail whenever they wanted and were granted other privileges such as trips to Kansas City in the company of the sheriff.

### Censorship Evader Indicted

SAN FRANCISCO, Dec. 27—A 19-year-old merchant seaman was indicted in the Department of Justice drive to prevent leakage of military information. The seaman, Gilbert Peter Anson, is charged with bringing nine uncensored letters from war fronts to the United States.

### Two V-Mail Records

WASHINGTON, Dec. 27—Soldiers sent and received more V-mail last month than ever before—40,428,300 pieces—and for the first time wrote more than the home folks. Of the total, 18,970,412 letters were dispatched from the U.S. and 21,457,948 from soldiers overseas.

### Cleveland Church Burns

CLEVELAND, Dec. 27—St. Malachi's Catholic Church, a widely known landmark on the city's west side, was destroyed by fire. The church was built in 1886 and underwent \$20,000 worth of improvement only a year ago.

### Gen. Marshall's Birthplace

UNIONTOWN, Pa., Dec. 27—The American Legion post here proposed that the birthplace of Gen. George C. Marshall be made a national shrine. Gen. Marshall was born here on Dec. 31, 1880.

### Slave Forms Turn Up

HARRISBURG, Pa., Dec. 27—While moving documents from one court house to another, clerks came across a large batch of papers which turned out to be forms for the registration of slaves. They were used in Pennsylvania a century ago.

### 18 Injured in Accident

OKMULGEE, Okl., Dec. 27—At least 18 persons were injured in an accident in which three buses, a trailer and an automobile were involved. Traffic was tied up for four hours by the traffic jam which followed the accident.

## A Latrine Lawyer Gets His TS Slip a Bit Early

FORT LEAVENWORTH, Kan., Dec. 27 (AP)—One American gave the following reason for asking for draft deferment:—"I'm recuperating from traumatic periosynovitis of the flexor digitorum sublimis in the profundus muscle at the metacarpophalangeal joint."  
The Army, however, said no. A sore finger was not a good enough reason for deferment.

## Gone Is the Day When The House Might Buy

NEW YORK, Dec. 27—Because of the whisky shortage, the old saloon custom of the house buying a drink has been abolished by a group of tavern keepers on the West Side between 86th and 110th Streets. The movement is spreading rapidly throughout the city.  
Too, no longer will the bartender leave the bottle on the bar for the customer to pour himself a drink.

## Famous Fugitive Refused Pardon by Georgia Board

ATLANTA, Ga., Dec. 27—Gov. Ellis Arnall's endorsement as a private citizen that Elliott Burns, the famous "fugitive from a Georgia chain gang," be pardoned was rejected by the State Board of Pardons and Paroles.  
Edward D. Everett, chairman of the board, said that if Burns were pardoned hundreds of other escaped convicts probably would file similar appeals and "we would be like another Reno with its divorce cases." The board declined to take action on Burns' case until he returns to the jurisdiction of Georgia.

## Man Plans to Kill First Person He Meets—and Does

POUGHKEEPSIE, N.Y., Dec. 27—A 22-year-old former State Hospital patient who has confessed that he awoke the night of Oct. 26 and decided to kill the first person he met was held for Grand Jury action for the slaying of a pretty young student Army nurse.  
Supreme Court Justice Raymond E. Aldrich placed the fate of Bernard Butler in the hands of a jury, apparently convinced after three days of testimony that Butler had knowledge of the brutal murder of Lucille Lawrence, 19, of Lisbon, N.Y.

### Congress Recesses

WASHINGTON, Dec. 27—Congress, which recessed last Tuesday for the Christmas holidays, will meet again on Jan. 10.

## 122,000 Men Out In Steel Strikes

### 228,000 Others Expected To Follow as Disputes Paralyze Industry

WASHINGTON, Dec. 27—America today faced one of the most paralyzing strikes in its history as 122,000 members of the United Steel Workers stopped work in a move to force the War Labor Board to approve a wage increase of 17 cents an hour. By tomorrow 350,000 workers are expected to be out.

Although there was no strike call, workers in 214 steel plants began to walk out at midnight Saturday when the union's contract expired. If the strike is not settled by next week, when other contracts expire, more than 500,000 men will be on strike.

The War Labor Board has refused to grant the union its wage demands, insisting that any increase would violate the Little Steel Wage formula, which limits war-time pay boosts.

Meanwhile, President Roosevelt waited for all the five operating railroad brotherhoods to accept his offer to mediate their wage dispute. Two of the unions have accepted his offer and have called off the strike which was scheduled to begin Thursday.

## Hearing on Divorce Proves Adage That Iceman's Hot Stuff

MINNEAPOLIS, Dec. 27—That ancient joke about the family iceman came to life last week in the courtroom of Judge Vince Day.

Mrs. Theresa Hartnell testified in divorce proceedings that her husband Ernest was inhumanly cruel and often accused her of infidelity.

Hartnell said, in a cross-complaint that his wife once brought the iceman into the house and introduced him as "the man she loved."

Mrs. Hartnell identified the iceman as Veri Barrickman and told Judge Day that she hoped some day to marry him.

## 30 Nabbed in Drive to Smash Large Whisky Black Market

WASHINGTON, Dec. 27—Thirty men have been arrested in a roundup of what the government calls the largest whisky black market yet uncovered.

In New York seven men were nabbed when they offered to sell thousands of cases of whisky stored in Connecticut, Massachusetts, Kentucky and Maryland. Other arrests were made in St. Louis, Kansas City and Minneapolis.

The arrests in New York were brought about by a tip from the management of the Hotel Astor, who said they had been approached by a group of men who

offered to sell them legitimate liquor at black market prices.

Lester Dunnigan, assistant supervisor of enforcement for the New York Division of the Federal Alcohol Tax Unit, said the prices quoted were \$86 for a case of Scotch, which has a ceiling price of \$43; \$76 for a case of bourbon and \$66 for a case of rye.

An agent of the Tax Unit posed as a wine steward for the Hotel Astor and arranged a phoney deal for \$43,000 worth of whisky. When some of the liquor was delivered to the hotel, the men were arrested.



By Jean Baird

### Diane



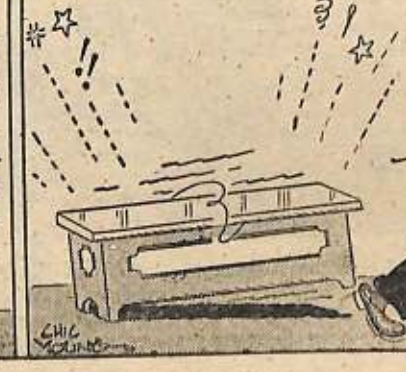
By Milton Caniff

### Male Call



By Chic Young

### Blondie



### Yes, There Is a Santa Claus (In The ETO)



Doris White, dancer with USO-Camp shows, helps Pvt. Richard L. Cook look through his Christmas stocking.

U.S. Army Signal Corps Photos

### Postal Packin' Papas (MPs)



Keystone Photo

Post office officials cried for help and 300 MPs turned up to help the holiday mail delivery in the Bronx.

### Deanna Testifies



Associated Press Photo

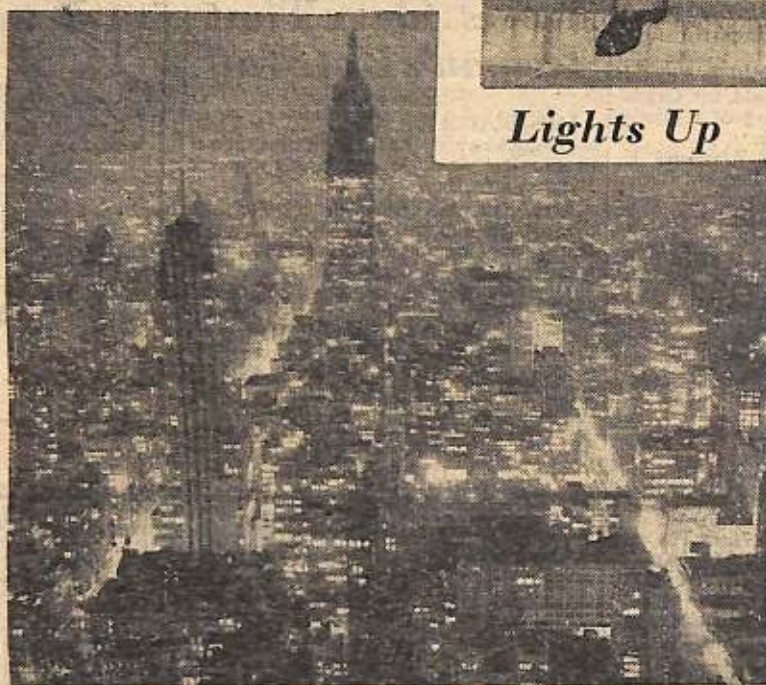
Evidence that Deanna Durbin is ready for mature roles is shown in this photo taken in divorce court.

### Sign, Here Please



A charter member of the Short Snorters, Col. Erik Nelson, of Seattle, signs one for Col. William A. Hatcher Jr., an ETO Fortress station commander.

### Lights Up



GIs lucky enough to be celebrating Christmas in good old New York didn't have a black-out to bother with. Maybe you'll see this in '44.

### They Favor Romance



Film stars K. T. Stevens (left) and Marguerite Chapman say girls who refuse to marry soldier and sailor sweethearts "comprise a dangerous group of defeatists."

### "Mrs. Air WAC"



Keystone Photo

Men at Lowry Field voted Pvt. Mary L. Nystrum as the "most glamorous married woman in the Air WACs."

### K-9's Seek Jap-Rats



Keystone Photo

Jungle-suited Marines use trained dogs to smell out Japs on bush-covered Bougainville Island. The canines are good messengers, too.