

February 10, 1944

The employment situation has been rather serious. We have lost seventeen men to the military forces, some of whom have already given a mighty good account of themselves. One boy, not included in the seventeen, is a nephew of our Mrs. Farris and Mr. Farris, and has won decorations for valiant service in the Army Air Corps in North Africa. He is now in Italy.

The last two men who were taken from us were Ernest Pontius who had been head man on local advertising for several years, and Wesley McCalla, linotypist. Pontius is thirty-five years old, has two children about eight and six years old, a wife, and is the sole support of his mother who is now well along in years. McCalla has been married several years and has two children, the oldest about three years old.

We have one discharged soldier in our employ and among the others, two men who are incapacitated because of their hearing, one having to depend upon a hearing device in order to hear. At least six of our present workers are veterans of World War I, and we have quite a group of women workers.

We shall be happy when General MacArthur is able to put Rabaul out of business and can finish up his work on New Guinea. That has been a big, hard, unspectacular job.

Many of us feel that some men have been held back and have not been as strongly supported because of politics. We hope this is not true, but it looks that way. We shall be glad to have you tell us how it looks to you, that is, in so far as such information would be permissible, and if there is anything more that we can do, we shall be glad to do it.

I think probably it was wise for you to sell your house, if you do not count on returning to Lawrence to live. I have in mind that following the war, there may be new types of construction or new styles which will tend to lessen the value of present buildings.

Wishing you all the good luck in the world, in which I am sure Gertrude joins me, I remain

Your Friend

W. C. Simons

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