

Carnival of Joy Loosed As Toronto Celebrates European Victory News

Laughter and tears, a medley of noises welling up to a blue sky, ticker tape glinting earthward from office buildings, the blare of horns, the roar of planes overhead, flags and bunting fluttering in the spring breeze, open church doors and prayers—this was Toronto's response yesterday to the end of the European war.

To those whose minds travelled backwards to the end of another war nearly 27 years ago, the silencing of the guns in Europe this time brought release from bondage of the spirit. And to those whose span of years fall between two wars, the day of days meant noise and more noise, snake dances, the waving of flags, the complete surrender to boisterous celebration.

Toronto let loose a tidal wave of enthusiasm that drowned out the Government's expressed desire to have VE-Day observed the day following the announcement of the unconditional surrender of Germany. Stores and office buildings closed down and the staffs rushed outside to merge with the singing, shouting crowds that marched down the middle of the business thoroughfares, heedless of the few automobiles and street cars that ventured their way.

Weather Is Perfect

There couldn't have been a better day for rejoicing. A soft blue sky and a sun that contained enough warmth to make coats an encumbrance, provided the background for the carnival of joy. It was perfect weather to match perfect news, and as night fell with its hint of spring chill, bonfires blazed skywards from city parks and fireworks illuminated the faces of youngsters and oldsters and the in-between.

Youngsters Spark Fete

A piper and a drummer led one boisterous group through the lobby of the King Edward Hotel—girls received hearty kisses from total strangers—men and women clasped hands—throats became rather choky. Five years and eight months of war that had touched the spirit if not the body of most of those who celebrated, was finished.

The men in uniform were less demonstrative, less exuberant, especially those who wore ribbon and whose eyes told of things that the bobby sox brigade would not have to see. And it was the youngsters who sparked the city-wide celebration. They led the singing, the tumult, the dancing. They applied lighted matches to piled up ticker tape and torn telephone books, and to the symphony of a citizen letting go and pulling out all the stops, was added the wail of fire sirens as the brigade reels dashed madly from one false alarm to another.

F-for-Freddie and a couple of less war-experienced Mosquitos flirted with the top stories of office buildings and played ring-around-the-rosy with a staid Lancaster that droned across the sky like a tired old lady. These planes released bags of paper scraps that swirled down to merge with the paper and tape that cascaded from office windows. The stock exchange, after 35 minutes of operation, decided to call it a day and the overworked staffs went to work enjoying themselves.

City Lets Off Steam

The Bell Telephone Co. handled the biggest day's business in its history as men and women scrambled to telephones to spread news that was no longer news to those who received the calls. What showed on the surface of a great city's reaction was the letting off of steam. Beneath the gayety and the demonstration was the hidden grief in ed with pride in the realization that thousands of homes, a brief blend—those who would never come back had helped to bring about the day of victory.

Victory at Great Price

In many a church and in the privacy of homes, were those who prayed and wept. For these the victory was bought at great price. For the blinded and the maimed, for those lying in Christie Street Hospital with broken bodies, it was the lowering of the curtain on a long act of ghastly madness in which they had played a role and played it well. Their minds were jogged into remembrance of the stench of death.

But these were the quiet people, the pain-ridden, the grief-filled. Out in the streets were the marching, singing people, filled with one thought—to make the first European peace day in nearly six years one to long remember.

The liquor stores had longer queues than usual. The restaurants—those that remained open—were jammed by happy throngs. In some restaurants the kitchen help untied their aprons and walked out, and the proprietors locked the doors and called it a day. From early morning until well on into the next morning, there was music and singing.

Little Vandalism

Little vandalism was reported. It was a good-natured, merry kind of celebrant the police had to handle. There were minor infringements of the law that brought no stern re-

buke. Youngsters rode short distances on the front of streetcars, stood on the running boards of motor cars, and the law just let them go ahead. Vehicles were parked on "no parking" streets and the windshields were left unadorned by police tags.

At 3 p.m., some brimming spirit started a crap game at the intersection of Queen and Yonge Sts. Servicemen and civilians gathered round for the sporting event. Four sailors took over direction of traffic at Yonge and Adelaide Sts., since no one was paying any attention to traffic lights.

There was enough waste paper on downtown streets to satisfy the needs of the paper salvage committee for months to come.

City Hall Focal Point

Toronto's City Hall became the focal point for teeming thousands. They surged back and forth on Queen St., and north and south on Bay St. Before noon they beat time to music that blared from Victory Loan loudspeakers. Twice they called for Mayor R. H. Saunders and twice the mayor stepped on the platform, spoke a few words and led them in singing hymns and God Save the King. The crowd dwindled after the noon hour, but in the early afternoon additional thousands surged around the building. High school and college students seemed to be in the majority. Hawkers of noise makers did a roaring business in the centre of James St. They soon sold out of horns, rattles, flags of all nations, confetti and bunting.

Servicemen and their girl friends hopped onto running boards, perched on car bumpers and even staddled the hoods of the vehicles. Nobody cared. Yonge St. presented the same scene. Street car and vehicular traffic came to a stop. Thousands filled the Yonge-Queen intersection and spread north or south from there. From Dundas to King, Yonge St. was a solid mass of shifting, swaying humanity. Like other public buildings, City Hall closed early. The Parliament Buildings closed at 1 p.m.

Pacific War Still To Go

Mayor Saunders, in an address shortly after the first report of Germany's unconditional surrender, urged citizens to remember that, while they should be happy, the war in the Pacific was not yet won. Before deciding to proceed with the official service today, and the parks' celebration yesterday, the Mayor communicated with Ottawa authorities and was informed it was safe to proceed.

Plan's Keep Up Output

The shrill note of factory whistles touched off a few spontaneous demonstrations in war plants. There was no unrestrained demonstration to match the mood of the citizens in the streets. Some of the women workers broke down and wept. Perhaps for them and their kin victory had come too late. Though most of the plants began shutting down at 11 o'clock, the busy hum of the machines continued in other plants

whose product is geared to the needs of the Pacific war.

It was a field day for the youngsters. Many of them were infants when the Nazis invaded Poland in 1939. These kids, wide-eyed toddlers hanging onto an older brother or sister, brought up the rear of many a ragged parade. Drums and bugles made their appearance around noon. Air force men and women blew and played themselves into near exhaustion. The boys and girls in blue headed one of the biggest downtown parades. At its head were the Union Jack and the flag of the United States, Russia and China.

Soldier Plays Tarzan

A soldier played Tarzan on the east side of Yonge, just south of Richmond, as he scaled the front of a store building to the second storey and pulled down several flags which he tossed to his buddies below. Several soldiers designated themselves as semi-official kissers of passing girls, but in most cases their advances did not seem unwelcome.

It was evident that the people who accomplished the more spectacular strokes of public celebration were those who were too young to have remembered the first World War armistice, and those who were too old to miss coming prepared. The youngsters, having no precedent to follow, did what they expected they were expected to do. The oldsters, those who came prepared, nipped surreptitiously at their bottles throughout the day to fortify a spirit with spirits. Three women and their bottle assailed a policeman. He wiped the lipstick from his cheek and told them to beat it. They laughed.