

The County
NEWSTELLER

A Monthly Magazine Dedicated to the County and School Officials
of West Virginia

PUTNAM COUNTY COURT HOUSE
Dedicated in 1900, Winfield, W. Va.



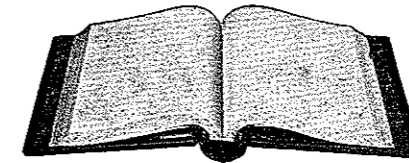
(No. 10 in a series of 55 front covers being used to present the Court Houses of West Virginia)

Volume II

OCTOBER, 1939

Number 1

The County
NEWSTELLER



A news magazine devoted to those public officials to whom the county's vital records and business management are entrusted and securely safeguarded.

Published monthly by Casto & Harris, Inc., Spencer, W. Va., specialists in county and school record books, election supplies, printing, office supplies and equipment.

Record Books of Everlasting Service

Volume II

OCTOBER, 1939

Number 1

Knight Reelected Court President

**Governor Holt Is Speaker
At Annual Convention**

A. Leeman Knight, Harrison county commissioner, was re-elected president of the Association of County Commissioners of West Virginia, at the closing session of a two-day convention held at Charleston Oct. 12-13. All other officers were reelected.

More than 100 county officials, including county clerks, assessors, circuit clerks, etc., attended the meeting, which featured a banquet followed by an address by Governor Holt.

The Governor stressed the important roles played by county officials, noting a tendency away from local responsibility in government. He recalled that in the last seven years certain county roads and schools functions have been delegated to the state.

"This was inevitable under the tax limitation amendment," he said, but added that any tendency toward centralizing responsibility increases the strain upon the citizen's personal sense of responsibility.

Holt continued:

"Because of the limitations of your territory, you county officials might not regard your position seriously, but I cannot accentuate too strongly the important place you occupy as the citizen's closest contact with government. And I urge you to keep constantly before the individual his obligations as a citizen."

VALEDICTORIAN



Miss Birdie Hall

Miss Hall is a daughter of Homer Hall, president of the Lincoln county board of education, and Mrs. Hall. A graduate of Hamlin high school, she was valedictorian of her class.

Death and Taxes

When Sheriff D. W. Crawford of Randolph county sent out 1939 tax statements to one Mrs. Mary Doe, he received the following answer, apparently from a neighbor: (Obviously, all names used are fictitious)

"to sheriff of Elkins

"Mrs. Mary Doe has past away for about a month.

"A. J. Jones."

"Dead" Man Is Found Alive

**Writes to Lewis County Clerk
For Birth Certificate**

A former Weston resident who was legally declared dead by the county court in 1934 has written to County Clerk J. O. Bleigh requesting that his birth certificate be forwarded to him in New York City in order that he might obtain a passport to France.

The man is William Edmund Donlan, 39, a son of the late William E. Donlan and Mary Cummings Donlan. He left Weston in 1916 after a disagreement with his parents and never returned.

For a while Donlan wrote to relatives at Weston, but never disclosed a return address. When a brother died in 1925, a newspaper and radio appeal over the nation was instituted, but it went unheeded.

He inherited his share of a valuable estate following the death of his parents in 1933, but again a radio and newspaper appeal for his return was unsuccessful. A year later he was declared legally dead by the court after an administrator of the estate was appointed, John Rafferty, a relative.

Undergoes Operation

Her many friends will be glad to learn that Mrs. A. R. Martin, wife of the Monongalia county clerk, is recovering nicely from a minor operation performed several weeks ago.

Wood County Official Succumbs to Bullet Wounds; Assailant Suicides After Crime



W. O. Holliday

Murder and suicide visited the Wood county court house in Parkersburg the morning of Oct. 9, resulting in the death of W. O. Holliday, county commissioner, and Sam Creel, former court house janitor there.

The tragedy occurred in the county commissioner's courtroom on the first floor of the courthouse just before the commissioners were to assemble for their morning session.

Commissioner Holliday, the only occupant of the room, was sitting behind the bench reading a newspaper when Creel entered. The victim told officials later that when Creel asked, "What's the

news?" he pushed the paper across the bench.

Before he could withdraw his hand, Holliday reported, Creel exposed his revolver over the top of the bench and fired, the bullet grazing the top of the fingers on his right hand and the right side of his neck.

A second shot missed the commissioner, imbedding itself in the back of the leather-upholstered chair in which he sat. Three more bullets, however, entered the right side of the victim's chest, lodging in his back under the right shoulder.

Creel ran into an adjoining room at the right of the court-

room, occupied by Miss Helen Booth, stenographer, the gun still in his hand. Entering a private toilet off Miss Booth's room he locked the door and shot himself when Sheriff R. E. Hays and Deputy Sheriff Leonard South arrived on the scene and demanded that he come out.

Commissioner Holliday staggered into the office of President Earl Eaton of the county court, about three steps from where he was sitting, and said, "Sam Creel just shot me."

Besides President Eaton, County Clerk Earl Wolfe and Mrs. Gladys Taylor, his secretary, were in the room. Wolfe, having heard the shots but believing the sound came from the first floor corridor, dashed out the door in an attempt to intercept Creel as he emerged from the courtroom, only to find he had not come out.

Creel, examination revealed, had shot himself through the right temple, the bullet passing through his head and imbedding itself in the plaster wall. Five empty shells were found in the revolver, and investigating authorities assumed he had shot himself with a sixth bullet, another shell being found on the floor.

Commissioner John Yeager, who was standing in the corridor when the shooting occurred, expressed his belief that all three commissioners would have been shot had he and President Eaton been in the room with Holliday.

Authorities believe Creel shot Holliday after brooding over his dismissal from the post of janitor early last July. The man was released by the county court upon Holliday's motion. The reason for his discharge was not revealed, but commissioners said his post had not been filled.

Commissioner Holliday was rushed to a hospital, but he succumbed two days later. A touching tribute to his memory was prepared by the surviving members of the court.

Mr. Holliday was elected to the court in 1936. Previous to that time he served eight years

(Continued on Page Three)

Unusual Warrant Is Received

Lincoln County Circuit Clerk Vouches for This One

Because no further comment is needed, the following peace warrant, received at the office of L. E. Thacker, Circuit Clerk of Lincoln county, is reproduced verbatim, with names omitted for quite obvious reasons:

"State of West Virginia, Lincoln County, eo-wit:

"H_____ A_____ upon oath, claims that on the 2 day of May on or about, 1939, in the County of Lincoln State of West Virginia, J_____ B_____ did git her a baby a boy baby, age 6 Moth Name Harol, L_____ did this my baby, and J_____ B_____ is the father of hit.

"Therefore the said H_____ A_____ wants J_____ B_____ prays that the said arrested and hell to anser the compant.

"H_____ A_____ "Sworn to and subscribed before me, this 22 day of August, 1939."

—Send in Pictures—

Reception Room

Kanawha's county court has provided a new reception room for J. Blackburn Watts, prosecuting attorney.

It was created by partitioning off the hallway adjoining the suite of offices, making possible direct entry from the reception room into each room of the suite.

—Send in Some News—

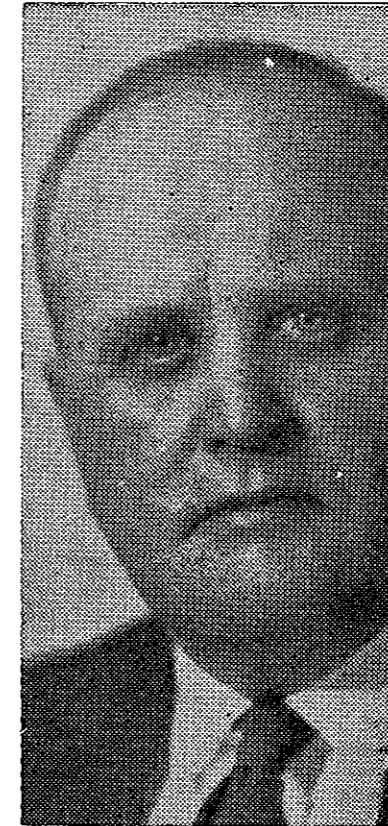
WOOD COUNTY OFFICIAL

(Continued from Page Two)

on the Independent district school board.

The new member of the County Court is N. B. Biddle, Williams-town merchant, who was named by the two surviving members of the court. His appointment was described by other county officials as a very satisfactory one.

ROANE SHERIFF



Phil D. Phillips

Sheriff Phillips, who was elected in 1936, also operates a drug store at Spencer and is interested in the oil and gas business.

SCHOOL BOND ISSUE DEFEATED IN LINCOLN

Climaxing a hotly contested election over the \$750,000 School Bond issue for new buildings and improvements of old buildings in Lincoln county, the voters treked to the polls Sept. 30 and registered their disapproval, the vote standing 1763 for and 3542 against.

It was necessary out of a total vote of 5305 for 60 per cent or 3183 to have voted for the issue in order that it might have been carried.

It is rumored that another bond election will be held in the near future; but for what amount and the improvements to be made have not been stated.

How Sandy Sank the Sink

I had twelve bottles of whiskey which my wife said I must pour down the sink—or else.

So I went down to the cellar and poured the first bottle down the sink, all but a small glassful which I drank. Then I poured the second bottle down the sink, except a glassful which I drank. Then I took the third bottle which I poured down the sink, except a couple of glasses which I sank.

Next I took the fourth glass and bottled it down the sink, except a bottleful which I drank.

Then I took the seventh sink and drank it except for bottleful which I sank.

Next I poured the twelftht bottle down the glass, except the bottle which I bottled, which I sank in the sink, except a cellarful which I tried to sell, but had to drink instead.

Then holding the house steady with one hand, with the other I fended off the other forty-three houses in the street as they came swimming up the cellar steps, except the cellar which I sank, as I watched the corks pull the houses of the bottles and pour the sinks down the whiskey, except a glassful which I drank.

NO TEASING At Elizabeth!

The following city ordinance was adopted by the council of the City of Elizabeth at a regular meeting Oct. 4, 1939, according to County Clerk Frank Thorne, who submitted this item:

"Be it ordained by the council of the town of Elizabeth, That it shall be unlawful for any one to tease, annoy or bullyrag another or to engage in rough, riotous or disorderly conduct within the corporate limits of the town of Elizabeth."

Wants to Know About Marriage

Writer Declares Woman Denies She is Married

The following letter, reproduced exactly as received but with names omitted, was mailed to J. O. Bleigh, county clerk of Lewis county, and was relayed to The NewsTeller by Miss Sue S. Boram, deputy county clerk:

"To County Clerk at court house
"Dear sir

"I am writing to you for information will you please write and tell me if _____ was ished marriages licens, to _____ out there if so you write and tell me and tell me how much the copy of her marriag will cost I send it to you at once she married _____ she denys of being married also she got her boy where was out there in the home his name is _____ they stayed at _____s, when they was married if you send me the copy write and tell me how much it is I send it for your trouble

"Yours truly"

—Send in Pictures—

SCHOOL OFFICIALS MEET AT KINGWOOD

Chief administrative officers of schools in central West Virginia counties on Oct. 24 at Kingwood heard discussions of school finances, legislation, attendance, transportation and other subjects common to the office of county superintendents.

About 30 superintendents and assistants attended the one-day meeting of the Central district association, its members guests of the Preston county schools. Paul Watson, county superintendent, was in charge of the program.

H. Isaiah Smith, secretary of the state board of school finance, was one of the morning speakers. E. Guy Kuhn, Taylor chief, led a round-table.

Heard in the afternoon were R. R. Marston, SEA executive secre-

DEPUTY CLERK



Dorothy Price

Miss Price has been a deputy in the office of County Clerk Roy Lester of Roane county since he first took office in 1932. She has attended several of the clerks' conventions, missing the 1939 one so that she might go to the New York World's Fair

tary, on legislation; J. J. Straight, Marshall county; Wade H. Coffindaffer, Harrison county assistant, on the attendance law; Carl R. Beer, Upshur assistant; Clarence Young, Clay county; and a report by Robert Crawford, Lewis county, Emily Wilmoth, Randolph county, and Fritz Stemple, Webster county, on the work and objectives of the superintendent's association.

—Send in Some News—

Friday, the 13th

Friday, Oct. 13th, was a lucky (or unlucky) day for 13 couples in Ohio county, according to L. L. Nightengale, circuit clerk of Ohio county.

On that day Judge J. H. Brennan granted 13 divorces.

MRS. SNYDER NAMED DEPUTY CIRCUIT CLERK

Mrs. Ona Snyder was appointed and sworn in as deputy circuit clerk by the Jackson county court recently to fill the vacancy made by the resignation of Miss Frances McGrew.

Miss McGrew resigned so that she could attend school this winter. She entered the Charleston School of Commerce.

Mrs. Snyder, who is secretary to Judge Lewis H. Miller, said that she had accepted the appointment until the first of the year when it is expected that Circuit Clerk Okey Ellison will have recovered sufficiently from his long illness to again take personal charge of the office.

—Send in Pictures—

DOG TAGS STOLEN!

The NewsTeller thanks W. Marshall Martin, deputy assessor of Cabell county, for sending the following postcard which was received in his office recently:

"Dear Sir

"some one taking my dog tage off my dog i know some one hade to take it off for i git a tag on him with my name and address on it and tha left it

"the County receipt no 523 and the number of the city number 220.

"so you can tell the man that take care of that port if he get my dog i git my name and address on him

"Very Truly Yours,

ELECTION CALENDARS COMING NEXT MONTH

Casto & Harris' biennial election calendar, showing all important dates for the 1940 elections, will be published in November and sent out free to all county and school officials in West Virginia.

Officials wanting an extra copy should drop the publishers a line now, as there is a great demand for these calendars and the supply will be soon exhausted.

Birds Hold Back Morgantown Time

But County Foils Them With Wire Netting

The clock on the Morgantown Court House has been rendering service for more than 50 years and is operated by large weights. The clock tower has four faces showing time but, having no electric connections, they are visible only in day time.

Recently a family of pigeons decided to hold back time and selected the big hand for a roost-

ing place. Their weight prevented the minute hand from moving up properly and, naturally, slowed down the clock activities.

After the cause was discovered a covering of screen wire solved the problem and the birds will have to plan another attack; an air raid, or something.

—Send in Some News—

85-YEAR-OLD BALLOT FOUND IN JEFFERSON

The Jefferson Publishing company of Charles Town reports that Forrest C. Littlejohn of Shenandoah Junction has unearthed an old ballot that had been used in the presidential

election on Nov. 4, 1856.

On the ancient piece of paper were the names of James Buchanan for President and John C. Breckinridge for Vice-President, the former from Pennsylvania, and the latter from Kentucky. With these were the names of 13 electors for Virginia. Jefferson county being in the tenth, had the name of J. Randolph Tucker, of Frederick county, as presidential elector. The voter was instructed to write his name on the back of the ballot. At the top of the ballot were set forth briefly, the "principles" of the Democratic party of that day.

Notables Present at Commissioners' Banquet



(Photo Courtesy Charleston Gazette)

Governor Homer A. Holt is pictured above with a group of individuals who attended the annual banquet of the Association of County Commissioners of West Virginia Oct. 12 at the Ruffner Hotel in Charleston. The gover-

nor was the guest speaker.

Left to right are: J. M. Slack, Kanawha county sheriff; James Kay Thomas, speaker of the house of delegates; Garland F. Wilkinson, chief deputy assessor, Kanawha county; Gov. Holt; Vir-

gil L. Moore, Wyoming county commissioner; John J. D. Preston, chairman of the state public service commission; Carl C. Calvert, Kanawha commissioner in charge of convention arrangements, and A. Leeman Knight of Harrison county, association president.

Old Records Go To University

Lewis County Sends Its Old Documents There

An order was entered recently by the Lewis County Court authorizing J. H. Ambler of the West Virginia University to take over a number of old records and papers at the court house. He was at Weston recently making arrangements to get these old papers which are now stored in an outbuilding near the Court House and which are becoming somewhat damaged. These records are no longer in active use but have an historical as well as possible legal value in years to come. When the offices were unable to take care of them they were stored in a building adjoining the court house. There are all sorts of papers, old records, of various types and the like.

Under a law of the state, the University is authorized to take over and make permanent these records when the county court agrees. The proper order has been entered and arrangements are being made to send the papers to Morgantown. The University takes care of this expense.

At Morgantown the records are re-written and probably bound. They are made into modern permanent records and are filed. A careful index is made up and this is filed with the county from which they were obtained. Whenever there is any need for these records, the index is consulted and they are secured from Morgantown.

—Send in Some News—

Serves 20 Years

Miss Alta Holley, deputy in the office of J. W. Anderson, Circuit Clerk of Putnam county, has worked in the court house for 20 years, most of that time in the Circuit Clerk's office. She also worked a short time in the Sheriff's office.

She has been with Mr. Anderson a total of 14 years.

War Vets' Records

A Hardy county newspaper is authority for the statement that there is more available information on the service records of Hardy countians who served in the World War than in any other county in the state.

It is mostly the work of one man, Dr. O. V. Brooks, who for 20 years has been compiling, indexing and keeping the records of all veterans in the county, without compensation. The records are superior and more complete than many counties where they have paid bureaus for keeping information of that nature.

Dr. Brooks can give you the age, birthday, service record, where and when and for how long, dependents, survivors, compensation records and probably how many teeth have fillings in them of every veteran from Hardy county.

The gentlemen from the state department of public assistance checking bonus and insurance claims for Hardy county even use

JAKE MARCUM, JR. TO WED NOV. 9TH

Lieut. Jake M. Marcum, son of County Clerk and Mrs. J. M. Marcum of Hamlin, Lincoln county, and Miss Bobbie Pauline of Dallas, Texas, will be married at Honolulu, Hawaii, Nov. 9, it has been announced by parents of the bride-to-be.

Lieutenant Marcum recently graduated from Kelly field, San Antonio, Texas, and was assigned to the Army air corps with headquarters at Honolulu.

—Send in Some News—

WE'RE DIFFERENT!

As far as its publishers know, The NewsTeller is the only monthly magazine that comes out the last of the month dated on the front cover. Most magazines come out the first of the month in which they are dated and several of them appear a month or two ahead of their dates.

Dr. Brooks' office for their headquarters.

View of Berkeley County Poor Farm



This farm, operated by the county commissioners of Berkeley County, is one of the finest of its kind in the state and is run at a profit to the county.

Commissioners are R. S. Balenger, Bunker Hill, president; P. V. Strine, Martinsburg, and Garland E. Johnson, Martinsburg, commissioners.

Baby Pictures Are Welcomed

Here's Chance for Deputies And Assistants to Have Some Fun

Publication of baby pictures of some of West Virginia's county & school officials would be of great interest to NewsTeller readers.

Office deputies and assistants are urged to try to "dig up" such pictures of their bosses and send them to us. If requested, we'll keep it a dark, deep secret as to how we got these photographs.

If you get them and send them in, we'll do the rest!

—Send in Some News—

TAXES GO UNCOLLECTED ON LAND DEEDED "GOD"

In a deed, recorded in Sullivan County, Pa., the grantor, Peter E. Armstrong, did "grant, deed, and convey to the Creator, the God of Heaven and Earth, and to his heirs in Jesus Messiah, for their use forever" 600 acres of land. It is reported that shortly after the deed was recorded, there was considerable controversy as to who should pay the taxes. Inasmuch as the land was deeded to "God," it was Mr. Armstrong's contention that if the assessor wanted to obtain taxes it was a matter entirely between the assessor and "God." Apparently a compromise could not be effected and the land was sold for taxes. . . . The will of Jenny Lind charged her executors to bury the deed to the cemetery lot in her coffin. Thus she holds the muniments of her title in event of an action of ejectment.—From The Lawyers Title News.

—Send in Some News—

Recuperating

Mrs. Nellie Aten, wife of County Clerk John G. Aten, of Mason county, is recuperating from an illness which kept her away from her duties as deputy clerk for some time.

RECOVERING



Frank Fisher

Mr. Fisher, clerk of the Braxton county court, is recovering nicely from a fractured skull and other injuries received Oct. 13 in an automobile accident at Sutton.

He is now resting comfortably at his home and expects to return to his office shortly.

EXPENSIVE DINNER FOR HOSPITAL GUESTS

Ruffed grouse that cost the Jackson county board of education something like \$2 per pound was served to patients at the Kessel hospital in Ripley recently.

Here's how:

The hapless grouse was flying too low one morning, crashed through a large glass window at the rear of the high school auditorium. The janitor heard the crash, put the wounded bird out of its misery. After due consultation, it was turned over to the hospital to be served to its patients.

—Send in Pictures—

New Deputy Sheriff

The Ritchie county court has appointed Hayward Barnard as deputy sheriff, succeeding Franklin Deem, resigned.

Mr. Barnard was recommended by Sheriff W. C. Taylor.

"J. P.'s" MAY RUN AGAIN, RULING SAYS

Ratification of the "JP" amendment would prevent magistrates and constables from holding office but they still may run for election in 1940, according to a ruling announced by the attorney general.

"In our opinion," Prosecutor William J. Moore of Hancock county was informed, "it is the duty of election officials to hold said election for justices at that time."

The pending "JP" constitutional amendment, submitted by the last legislature to a vote of the people in 1940, would substitute courts of limited jurisdiction for the magistrates.

—Send in Pictures—

Court House Painted

Mason county's court house has a new coat of aluminum paint. Also, practically the entire interior of the building has been renovated and the court house puts up its best appearance in years.

—Send in Pictures—

Makes Radio Talk

Garcia D. Pauley, Lincoln county superintendent of schools, made a talk over Huntington's radio station WSAZ Oct. 7 on the subject of "Parent-Teacher Relationship." His talk was part of the Farm & Home hour program.

Another Will

The New Current Digest reprints the following will, which it is claimed was actually probated after the death of its caustic maker:

"I leave to my daughter \$100,000. She will need it. The only good piece of business her husband ever did was to marry her. I leave to my son the pleasure of earning a living. For 25 years he thought the pleasure was mine. He was mistaken. To my wife I leave her lover and the knowledge that I was not the fool she thought I was."

Smallest Press In Plant



(Second in a series of pictures showing C. & H. employees at work)

This little 10x15 C. & P. hand-fed press, being operated by Harold Webb, native Roane countian, is the smallest press in the Casto & Harris plant, but it comes in mighty handy for short runs of small forms. Pressman Webb can average 1500 impressions an hour, has been with this company since he was old enough to go to work.

Although the photo makes it appear that the press is not moving, it was actually averaging 1200 impressions an hour. A super-fast camera and a flash-bulb turned the trick!

Sheriff's Son Hurt

Arnold Hays, 21-year-old son of Sheriff R. E. Hays of Wood county, suffered a fractured collar bone when his stalled automobile was struck on a railroad track at Parkersburg Oct. 1. A companion was uninjured.

Smith Appointed

Everett Smith, former sheriff of Tyler county, has been appointed as office secretary to W. E. Gamble, county superintendent of schools.

He succeeds Russell Roberts, who resigned.

How To Write Your Own Will

An exchange magazine reports the following as an actual copy of the last will & testament of one Herman Obelweiss of Anderson County, Texas:

"I am writing my will minselluf that dam lawyer want he should have too much money, he asks too many answers about family. first thing i want i dont want my brother oscar get a dam ting wat i got. he is a mumser he done me out of \$40 14 years since.

"i want hilda my sister she gets the north 60 akers of at where i am homing it now i bet she dont get that loafer husbon of hers to broke 20 akers next plowing time gonoph work. she cant have it if she let oscar live on it i want i should have it back if she does.

"tell momma that \$600 she been looking for for 20 years is berried from the backhouse behind about ten feet down she better let little frederick do the digging and count it when he comes up.

"pastor lunchnitz can have \$300 if he kiss the book he won't preach no more dumhead talk about polotike. he should a roof put on the medinghouse with and the elders should the bill look at.

"momma the rest should get but i wont it that adolph should tell her what not she do no slick irisher sell her vakum cleaners day noise like hell and a broom dont cost so much.

"i wont it that mine brother adolph should be my executer and i wont it that the judge should pleez make adolph plenty bond put up and watch him like hell adolphus is a good business man but only a dumoph would trust him with a busted pfennig.

"i dant dam sure that schliemical oscar dont nothing get tell adolph he can have \$100 if he prove it to the judge oscar dont get nothing dat dam sure fix oscar."

ATTENTION: WEST VIRGINIA EDUCATORS



Plan A Current Events Map Activity
And Let Your Classes Study "History
In The Making" With

RAND McNALLY'S
WAR MAP OF EUROPE

\$9.75 Complete

See our Display at S.E.A. Convention
at Wheeling

With the outbreak of war in Europe, new names, new places are being constantly headlined in current newspaper articles. An up-to-date map is necessary to visualize accurately what is happening.

In addition, progressive schools everywhere are giving more and more attention to the influence of these present-day events in the field of social studies.

To help visualize this work, and make it more interesting, Rand McNally offers this new type European War Map on which the gains and losses of both sides may be traced.

This map is just off the press—showing European boundaries just as they were when Hitler's troops marched into Poland.

Teachers are discovering many useful ways to use this new Rand McNally War Map. For example, students clip current events items from newspapers and magazines and bring them in for class discussion. The most significant and interesting are selected and put up on the generous margin of the map. Lines are drawn from the news item to the place on the map mentioned in the clipping.

String may be used also to connect the item with the map location. At regular intervals, the old clippings are removed and more recent items selected.

The washable surface of this map permits the coloring, with our special map-marking pencils, of different areas to show gains and losses of the belligerents, thereby making this map project continuous.

ALL NECESSARY EQUIPMENT INCLUDED

This new Rand McNally War Map is mounted on masonite 60 x 48 inches over all. It has a markable and washable surface, and taped edges and hangers so it can be hung from molding of the blackboard.

With each map are included

2 balls of cotton twine (1 red, 1 blue) ● 20 blue map tacks. ● 1 roll of scotch tape. ● 5 special map marking pencils (assorted colors). ● 12 map-tack card holders.



CASTO & HARRIS, INC.

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SPENCER, W. VA.