

Russell R. Cook Aleppo's Wondrous Warrior

By HERMES BOYATIS

FAR more than a warrior, **Russ** has proved to be a leader in everything he has tackled for the past eighty-four years — teacher, graphic artist, sportsman.

We began our interview with his wartime experiences. "I enlisted in the Reserve in October, 1942; was called to active service in February, 1943; spent six weeks at Combat Training Area, Fort Belvoir, Virginia, and was selected as one of thirty out of 1,000 to study transit operation at University of Kentucky." Russ's leadership went full speed forward.

"I boarded the Queen Mary in November, 1943, heading for England where I was assigned to 187 Field Artillery Howitzer Battalion on the west coast near Minehead. Eisenhower chose our unit to be one of the first to land. He spent the entire day with us on February 1944."

There's much more of war, but we chose to abbreviate his memorable military service so that we could return to his peaceful past and present. "Attached to the 29th Infantry Division, I was in five major conflicts including Battle of the Bulge. Eisenhower had given us papers to unload on June 7, but we had no room on the beach. We reached there on June 8. In an unforgettable confrontation, we and the enemy met weapon to weapon! Forty-eight hours before our landing, the Germans had sent a division of 8,500 for maneuvers on the beach! I was fortunate to have survived and was discharged on December 5, 1945."

Russell's forbears came from England in 1636.

His grandfather fought in the Civil War and his father in World War I. He has their discharge papers. He has traveled back and forth to England in his lifetime.

Now for his Freemasonry and Shrinedom. He was raised in Wilder Lodge in Leominster, serving as Master, 1952-1953. He joined Aleppo in April, 1947, and has been an active Shriner for 60 years. He added, "I became a charter member of the Fitchburg/Leominster Shrine Club in 1954."

His hopes for the future? "I'll be 85 years young in January, but I plan to continue my Shrine leadership for years to come!"

Married? "For fifty-seven years I have been husband to **Florence Zickell**. I met her in my uncle's office on the day of my discharge. She was his secretary. It was love at first sight!"

Hobbies? "I'm an avid sportsman - a target shooter in our back yard."

Any special talents? "I taught graphic arts at Fitchburg High School - silk screening, photography, and more. Sixty-five years ago I graduated from Leominster High School. We are preparing now for our reunion and I'm a member of the Reunion Committee."

As we have discovered, England, Fitchburg, Leominster, and New Hampshire have been paramount in Russell's and Florence's lives. For the past fifty-two years they have resided in Greenville, New Hampshire.

We are watching as they continue to be healthy, happy, and helping others!

Scottish Rite Prepares for Joint Session

FOR the first time in history, the two Scottish Rite jurisdictions in the United States will come together for a joint meeting in August. The special event is expected to attract more than 3,500 Thirty-third Degree Masons and their Ladies from 50 states.

The meeting will take place in Washington, DC, on August 26-28. Among those in attendance will be Grand Masters from most states as well as Scottish Rite representatives from many jurisdictions throughout the world.

John Wm. McNaughton, Sovereign Grand Commander of the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction, and **Ronald A. Seale**, Sovereign Grand Commander of the Southern Jurisdiction, will jointly welcome visitors to a special open session for men and women on Monday morning, August 27. A luncheon will follow. The Monday session will be preceded by a vesper service on Sunday afternoon.

Both jurisdictions will be conferring the Thirty-third Degree on a class of candidates. The Northern Jurisdiction degree is scheduled for late afternoon on Monday. The Southern Jurisdiction degree will take place on Tuesday morning. The degree is awarded for outstanding achievement in the fraternity or for significant contributions to others, reflecting credit on Freemasonry.

The Scottish Rite Research Society will hold its annual meeting on Tuesday afternoon when **Arturo deHoyas** and **Martin R. Starr** will present the SRRS lecture.

The three-day event will conclude with a gala banquet on Tuesday evening. All of the main events will be held in the International Ballroom at the Washington Hilton Hotel.

The meeting in the nation's capital takes place in conjunction with the biennial meeting of the Supreme Council for the Southern Jurisdiction and the annual meeting of the Supreme Council for the Northern Jurisdiction.



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