

# PM

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 15, 1945

## N. Y.'s Celebration Is Gayest of All Time

### News and Weather Perfect for All-Out Vic- tory Spree



Photos by Gordon and De Biase, PM

Also at Times Square: One girl tried to save friend who was getting kissed.

Seven million New Yorkers let down their hair last night in the wildest, loudest, gayest, drunkest, kissingest hell-for-leather celebration the big town has ever seen.

Those who didn't hear the news on the radio knew without being told that Japan had surrendered, for a few seconds after President Truman's announcement the five boroughs echoed and re-echoed to the din of countless river whistles and sirens and automobile horns.

The sudden cacophony of joyful noise could only mean one thing—peace. The tension that had been piling up for four days exploded and the town was on its way.

### Surge of Relief

Behind all the yelling, all the streaming people, all the drinking, all the kissing, was a vast surge of relief that the job had been done, and mingled with that were the heartfelt prayers of thanksgiving that sons and brothers and husbands and sweethearts and fathers were safe and would eventually come home.

In scores of neighborhoods the news set off loud but good-natured binges, and Times Sq., of course, was sheer bedlam.

The Times Sq. bender started at 3 a.m. Tuesday with word that the Jap news agency had announced Tokyo's acceptance of the Allied surrender note. From that time on the crowd slowly increased until, at 7 p.m., there were 100,000 or more in the square. By 7:05 there were 200,000, by 7:30 an easy million, and by 8 o'clock Chief Inspector John W. Conway estimated 2,000,000. Old-time police reporters thought his guess was conservative. It was easily the biggest crowd in Times Sq. history. The V-E Day crowd was only 500,000.



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Girls gathered around this Marine at Times Square. He said he felt solemn, thinking of buddies who would never return.

By 10 p.m. 2000 policemen were on duty in the square, besides 300 MPs, 250 SPs, and scores of detectives. In addition, 1100 members of the City Patrol Corps were assigned to the area between 39th St. and 110th.

### Jitterbugging

Where space permitted, and even sometimes where it didn't, servicemen and pretty girls hauled off for a little jitterbugging. Of the thousands of servicemen in the area there was hardly a one whose face wasn't liberally sprinkled with lipstick. One sailor, trailed by a nosy reporter, was kissed 11 times in one block.

Even by 7:30 the crowd was so dense that it took nearly an hour to walk the eight blocks from the Roxy to 42d St.

In front of the police booth several girls started kissing the cops and newspaper photographers promptly recorded the event, to the cops' vocal distress.

The streets were littered with torn paper which came cascading down from thousands of wastebaskets and hundreds of tickers. A brisk wind tossed the paper around the ankles of the heedless millions.

Liquor stores all over town had a brisk trade. Bars were packed; long lines waited to get into telephone booths; Western Union did a terrific business.

### Little Italy

Commissioner Patrick Walsh ordered 7500 firemen on duty, and some were stationed to guard alarm boxes, but nevertheless, within a few minutes after Truman's announcement, there were 11 false alarms in Manhattan below 59th St.

The entire police force was on duty, 14,500 officers and patrolmen, in addition to the entire detective force. Special guards were sent to the garment district and Wall St. Loudspeakers were set up in Times Sq. to carry police orders in case the crowd got out of hand.

Shavey Lee, "mayor" of Chinatown, said at his insurance office, 40 Mott St., that the crowd of about 60,000 was the biggest he had ever seen in the neighborhood in the last 43 years.

"It is the greatest and happiest day in China's history," he said, "and the Chinese people will be



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These happy soldiers arrived yesterday on the SS. Gen. Charles M. Muir, first troop transport from the Pacific to dock at New York. They were just in time to join the city's noisy celebration.

grateful to the U. S. A. forever."

In Little Italy there was free beer and wine for everyone, dancing in the streets, firecrackers and noise, noise, noise. At East Houston and Mott a 30-foot V, of sawdust and kerosene, with a dummy of Hirohito, burned brightly.

At 178 Mulberry St. Angelo Rizzo, "mayor" of Little Italy, poured out gallons of wine for all passersby, and said: "A lot of people forget that Italy declared war on Japan too. We are happy she is redeeming herself." His son, a major in the Medical Corps, was wounded on Guadalcanal.

Mrs. Teresa Idone, 171 Mulberry, came back from visiting her mother in St. Vincent's Hospital. "She went there two months ago," Mrs. Idone said, "because she's cried and worried for four years over my three brothers in the service. Tonight when I told her the war was over she yelled 'God Bless America' and then started crying."

Crescenza Tenneriello, who runs the Mare Chiaro bar at 176 Mulberry, declared open house and poured free drinks for all comers. Two sons are in the service, one in Europe and one in the Navy, in the Pacific. "I'm the happiest man in the world," he said. "I hope to God we never see anything like it again."

Up in Harlem Seventh and Lenox Aves., between 110th and 145th, were minor editions of Times Sq.

### **Chinatown**

The dragons danced at Chinatown last night in a victory celebration such as this little community within a city has never seen.

The tight streets were just choked with people. Firecrackers were going off under foot like machine guns. Cymbals and drums that herald the dragons approach were beating, while the Chinese, smiled.

To the other people, the visitors, this was a celebration of joy, and the wildly cavorting dragons were



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A sailor and a small boy were rivals in noise-making.

only an expression of enthusiasm. But Soo Hoo Bing Chong of 37 Bayard St., explained that there was a real significance to the dragon dance. One dragon started at the Bowery and went down Mott St. The other started at the Bowery and went down Pell St. Mott and Pell Sts. join at a right angle. There the two dragons met. Chong explained that this was a symbol of the co-operation that had made possible the victory.

And while thousands, residents and sightseers alike, were in the streets, hundreds filed into the Roman Catholic Church of the Transfiguration at Park and Mott Sts. to say prayers at the regular 7:30 service which last night was a service of Thanksgiving.

From the fire escapes on Mott and Pell Sts, the streets were showered with confetti. Chinese kids from all over the neighborhood rushed to the intersection of the main Chinatown thoroughfares, when they were too small, older people lifted them on their shoulders so they could see the dragons.

Almost all the Chinatown restaurants were closed as two dragons, symbol of China's rejoicing over her deliverance after eight years of war, snake-danced through the narrow, twisting, crowded streets. It was the biggest celebration in Chinatown's history.

### Fight

Along about 11 there was a fight—reason unknown—between a sailor and a civilian in the Lincoln Hotel lobby. A Wac lieutenant rushed up to a civilian and asked what had happened. The civilian replied: "Well, you know when you get drunk anything can happen," and the Wac responded: "Maybe I ought to get drunk."

At 46th St. and Broadway, a sailor sat on the curb and, whenever a girl whose looks he fancied passed by—which was remarkably often—he'd pull her down into his lap and kiss her.

At 45th and Broadway a woman stood in the middle of the street for nearly an hour beating a pie tin with a spatula.

Two pretty Wacs fled to a police sound truck to escape three soldiers and two sailors, who were trying to feed them rye whisky with a tablespoon. Once at the



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truck the Wacs cried "No, no, no!" The servicemen discarded the spoon and started drinking the rye themselves.

One soldier threw his arms around a very pretty woman in her late 20s and tried to kiss her. She said: "I'm married, I'm married!" The soldier retorted: "Well, tell your husband this is with the compliments of the Third Division," and gave her a resounding smack.

### Night Clubs

Some bars were closed and the night clubs were virtually empty. Radio City, the Empire State, the Chrysler Building and other skyscrapers were strewn with streamers and ticker tape from top to bottom. At Fifth Ave. and 45th, in front of the Andrew Geller shoe shop, one of the happy girls walking around thought of her shoe stamp, got it out of her handbag, and promptly lost it in a mass of confetti and torn paper. A couple of cops spent 20 minutes helping her look for it, but no luck.

Police made no arrests if they could possibly avoid it, and only five arrests were reported to midnight. Not a single case of malicious mischief had been officially recorded up to that time.

From 7:15 to 11 p.m. the fire apparatus in Manhattan made 64 runs, including 20 false alarms and 31 bonfires, and then gave up trying to keep count. The night will probably set a record in the number of bonfires started.

News of V-J Day was received quietly at Halloran Hospital on Staten Island, where about 4000 wounded veterans are being treated for battle wounds and campaign illness.

For two hours the men mulled over the news in silence. Finally, around 9 p.m., the walking wounded—about 1000 of them—started to parade around the grounds, headed by men who could play musical instruments.

The demonstration ended before



This was Elizabeth St. at Mott St. when Chinatown's real victory celebration began. Dragon is in center of crowd.



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11 o'clock, the usual hour for "lights out," but some of the patients couldn't sleep.

The sentiments of the men were expressed by Pvt. 1/C Robert Kellam, Atlanta, Ga., wounded at Bastogne, France, who has been a Haloran patient for five months. He said:

"I hope in the midst of the celebrating that some people will remember to take time out to say a special prayer for the boys who died yesterday and today and whose families will receive telegrams tomorrow and in the days after."

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