

# It's Not Quite the Same, But Letters, Gifts Cheer Up Gilmanton Boys Fighting Axis

## And When They Come Home There'll Be Real 'Hoedown'

By FRED E. BEANE

GILMANTON, May 5 — Must sound funny up in the Aleutians, down in the Solomons, or over in England or Italy when a Gilmanton boy or girl in service, asked where he hails from, replies "from Roxey and the Gang," and then breaks into a big smile, or turns suddenly solemn and sad with a recurring touch of genuine homesickness.

But it's dollars to doughnuts that the answer is "Roxey and the Gang" first, and then an explanation that of course the home town is Gilmanton. And there's a very good reason why, for all these youngsters now bearing arms against oppression, found their youthhood community center, clubhouse, playhouse and general meeting place to be a small general store at Gilmanton Corner, where the town's principal roads cross, and where "Roxey," the storekeeper's wife, makes befriending the village youngsters her first consideration and the selling of groceries, second.

### Population Only 700

Gilmanton is an attractive highland township that came within a single vote of being chosen capital of New Hampshire, but it is off the beaten path, has no railroad facilities, has but 700 population, depends generally on agriculture for a living, and so just hasn't any club house, Y.M.C.A. or Y.W.C.A., organized community center, or similar facilities for its young folks.

But its young folks are a happy, healthy, full-of-pep lot of boys and girls, and as they grow up they had to go somewhere, do something, and they did. All of them flocked to the little one-room village store when "Roxey" opened it. For they had

(Continued on Page Three)



This is "Roxey" of "Roxey and the Gang" fame in Gilmanton, whose love of the youngsters in the town brought them flocking to her village store through the years, which center they turned into a community house in everything but name. Here they played games, popped corn, and talked over their joys and sorrows. Little wonder then that when the war came, "Roxey" and her country store became headquarters for the finest morale-building drive ever undertaken. Letters from the service boys and girls are posted here. A list of addresses is kept. Roxey writes the boys. Everybody writes the boys. Telegrams come to the general store, and phone messages too. Parties for the boys are planned here. Even "Teddy," the gang's dog, has a part, and looks on with much pride as "Roxey" (Mrs. Harmon Stockwell) displays a bushel-box collection of service letters that about everybody in town has read.