

January 18, 1944

Gen. Bradley Is Chosen to Lead U.S. Ground Troops in Invasion; Preliminaries Over—Eisenhower; Allied Chief Praises Softening-Up Blows; Maitland Wilson Hints That Assaults in South May Be at France

Lt. Gen. Omar N. Bradley, who commanded the American Second Corps in the campaigns in Tunisia and Sicily and was one of Gen. Eisenhower's chief assistants in the Mediterranean theater, has been named commander of American ground forces in the European theater preparing for the coming invasion of Europe, it was announced yesterday.

Gen. Bradley, who is recognized as one of the foremost infantry experts in the U.S. Army, was given a large share of the credit for the American successes in the African fighting and was credited with holding casualties in the final battle for Tunisia to a minimum.

Gen. Bradley has been an infantry officer so long that he is known today as "the doughboy's general." Fifty years old, with graying hair and a square-hewed chin, he was graduated from West Point as an infantry lieutenant in 1915, served through the last war as a foot soldier and was in command of Fort Benning when the United States entered this war.

"It is the infantry," Gen. Bradley has said, "which must bear the brunt of battle. The infantry must have the will and the ability to close with the enemy and destroy him. It must expect to suffer a high percentage of casualties."

SPADEWORK ALREADY DONE

Meanwhile, the picture of Allied might menacing Hitler from the west and south, as well as the east, grew clearer as Gen. Eisenhower disclosed that the pre-invasion task already was far advanced in Britain and Gen. Sir Henry Maitland Wilson, Allied commander in the Mediterranean, hinted of blows in fresh quarters in that theater, possibly in southern France.

Gen. Eisenhower, in his first press conference as commander-in-chief in the west, gave warm praise to the air forces for the blows they were inflicting now on the enemy, and paid particular tribute to the infantrymen in the United Kingdom who, he said, "are getting themselves ready and toughened for any job that lies ahead."

At a similar conference at Allied headquarters in the Mediterranean, meanwhile, Gen. Sir Maitland Wilson said that "with luck" the European war would be won this year. He spoke of blows from any direction, indicating that the Axis could not expect to hold the southern flanks merely by a stout defense in Italy alone.

Gen. Maitland Wilson said that southern France, like any other area along the Mediterranean front, might be turned into a battlefield if the opportunity for successful operations there developed. He disclosed that he was to confer with Gen. Charles de Gaulle tomorrow.

GENERAL PRAISE FROM CHIEF

Gen. Eisenhower, whose arrival in England after conferences with Prime Minister Churchill and President Roosevelt was announced only 24 hours earlier, made it clear to the press at his first conference that things were not just starting with his arrival.

"I hail the good work of the naval forces," he said, "particularly recently when they nailed the Scharnhorst and got those three destroyers in the Bay of Biscay. These were simply dramatic moments—the grand work the navies have been doing is evidenced by all of the troops brought into England safely."

"We all salute the work of the air forces—what they have done by pounding Germany, reducing her military potential, at great risk to themselves and with absolute courage."

"It's a wonderful story—even those parts of the effort that have not been publicized. We should not overlook the work of the base people, nor the fine infantry, training and preparing out in the cold moors and countryside in the mud and rain. They are getting themselves ready and toughened for any job that lies ahead."

The new Allied supreme commander told correspondents that "fundamentally, public opinion wins wars," and asked the fullest and frankest possible reporting of operations in this theater.

"I take it," he said, "that you are just as anxious as I am to win this war and get it done so we can all go fishing."

Striking strongly at any idea that an apology is needed in connection with Allied progress in the Mediterranean theater, Gen. Eisenhower said the troops there "have become extraordinary fighting men—navy, air and ground."

"They are working together as a real team," he said. "I don't mean only in the higher echelons among the commanders in chief working with me, but down through the different units of command. You found this all the way."

January 18, 1944

Sings a Debtor in the Infantry: Praise the Lord and Pass Those Planes the Credit

by Charles F. Kiley, Stars and Stripes Staff Writer

S/Sgt. John Ready, veteran of the North African and Sicilian campaigns, is one foot-slogger in the infantry who loves the air force and firmly believes in air support.

Ready was taken prisoner in Africa in the battle for Sedjenane Valley, spent weeks inside German prison camps. He was freed to fight another day by Flying Fortresses which bombed an enemy ship trying to run the Allied air-sea blockage to Italy with a cargo of American, British and French prisoners.

Ready's experience as a prisoner of war may be typical of what any soldier may expect in the hands of the enemy. He knew what to do, how to act and what to say. As a result, the Chicagoan imparted no military information, and while life in a prison camp is no bed of roses, he survived to tell about it.

"I was taken prisoner with two men in my squad in the early stages of the Sedjenane Valley battle and while on patrol duty in enemy territory," he related. "While investigating an abandoned house in an area infested with anti-personnel mines and booby traps, we were ambushed and captured by German paratroopers.

"Taken to an enemy headquarters post, we were given a meal of soup, potatoes, stewed prunes and coffee. Curious German soldiers gathered around us asking for souvenirs. One wanted to trade his German-made watch for my GI. Some of them offered cigarettes and cigars. Frankly, I was more than a little surprised at their friendliness."

Ready later was taken about four miles to an Afrika Korps division headquarters, where a clerk and two officers offered him wine and asked for identification cards and pay books. One of the officers, Ready said, was a short, comical-looking man whom he was to encounter later in a U.S. prison camp in Mateur.

CROSS-EXAMINED

"They also took our wallets and seemed mighty interested in a girl's picture I had," Ready said. "From that place they drove us by truck to a G-2 office on the Tunis-Bizerte road. There were were questions again, one at a time.

"After reading a report on us, an officer asked me if I knew Maj. Brown, told me I was from Co. C of the —— regiment and tried to impress us with his knowledge of positions held by American forces."

Other questions asked in the interrogation were:

"What unit is on your right? On your left?"

"How many men to do think you have in reserve?"

"When did you arrive in that area?"

"When is the war going to end?"

To all queries, Ready and the others gave no answers, except

the last one. To that, Ready said: "Your guess is as good as mine."

The next stop for the prisoners was Ferryville, where they were put in an underground room of concrete that housed 30 men, including French officers, a French chaplain, British soldiers, a U.S. major in Special Service, a quartermaster major and a lieutenant colonel in the infantry. Their beds were piles of straw on the concrete floor.

"Our daily ration," added Ready, "consisted of one loaf of bread for every four men, one can of meat for 18 and coffee served at breakfast and supper. We also got prunes every morning at 10 and every afternoon. Our guards didn't eat much better, but they had white bread and occasionally gave us their leftovers."

They also were allowed to dig graves and conduct burial services for American soldiers who died in the prison hospital. The ceremonies were simple, yet impressive, Ready said. Each coffin was draped with an American flag and a major led the prayers.

CAMP EVACUATED

When the Anglo-Franco-American advance gathered impetus in Tunisia the camp was evacuated and the prisoners removed to the port of Tunis, from where they were to be taken to Italy. En route to Tunis, Ready and other prisoners found about 200 bars of British-made Cadbury's chocolate, three pounds of lump sugar and cigars in the back of their truck.

"I guess truck drivers are the same in any army," Ready laughed. "Always making sure they don't run short of supplies."

Thrown in with 700 other Britons and Americans, Ready and his group were imprisoned in an old school in Tunis for one day. There the guards allowed women of the French Red Cross to bring them food.

The following day, while they were being loaded on the Italy-bound ship, seven planes bombed the harbor. The ship was later attacked three times in the day and prevented from making much headway.

The Fortresses showed up the next day, and while they didn't score a direct hit, one bomb came close enough to spring the shell plates. Water rushed through the openings and the vessel headed for shore. It ran aground about a mile off shore and the ship's crew deserted. An American colonel took charge of the U.S. personnel, and two days later Ready was back with his company.

"I didn't know whether those Forts wanted to hit the ship," Ready said. "There would have been casualties if they did. Maybe they wanted to do what they did—force the ship ashore and give us a chance to get away without anybody being hurt."

January 25, 1944

Got the ‘Message to Garcia’ Through; A Pint-Sized Package of Valor Modestly Keeps Under Wraps

by Charles F. Kiley, Stars and Stripes Staff Writer

Remember when an officer’s orderly and runner was a “dog robber”? There probably are a lot of Joes still wincing under the sting of that Army jibe but they have a talisman in pint-sized Walter Neely, buck private and 26-year-old ex-grocery clerk from Middletown, Ohio.

Neely, whose outward appearance of timidity belies his true character, was a “dog robber”—an officer’s runner. He wears the Distinguished Service Cross and Purple Heart to show he is a good one and that you don’t have to be a professional soldier with a flair for “blood and guts” heroics to serve “above and beyond the call of duty.”

It was a Maknassy, where American forces furiously fought some of Rommel’s best in Africa, that Neely earned the second highest U.S. decoration for valor and his wound medal.

SENT BACK TO REAR

“Our rifle platoon was dug in with machine-gun support quite a distance behind us,” Neely said. “Our lieutenant wanted the machine-gun fire to cease and sent me back with a verbal message to the heavy weapons’ company. On the way I was hit by enemy machine-gun fire but managed to deliver the message and get back to my own outfit.”

What Neely didn’t say, however, was that the action took place at 2 o’clock in the morning and that he had to travel blindly through an anti-personnel mine field to reach his destination.

Only the day before, his company commander was killed when a mine exploded in that same area. Realizing he couldn’t make much progress by crawling through the mined sector and still deliver the message quickly, Neely disregarded the possibility of being picked off and set out as swiftly as possible.

Before he got very far, a German machine-gun crew spotted him and opened fire. He was hit in the leg and dazed. No one would have blamed him for calling it a day right there and waiting until dawn, rather than literally beg for a military funeral.

DRAGS SELF REST OF WAY

Neely, however, got up and dragged himself the rest of the way, delivered the message without reporting his injury and proceeded to make his way back over the same route to complete his mission and inform the office the order was receipted.

Not until he was seen trying to take care of his wound was Neely’s outfit aware he had been hit. At first he refused first aid, saying the wound was slight. Actually, it was slight enough to keep him hospitalized for the remainder of the campaign.

Shy and soft-spoken, reluctant to consider his act more than a soldier’s duty, Neely said: “It wasn’t anything, really it wasn’t.”

January 26, 1944

Bennett Escapes, Gets the Story Out

One of the most graphic stories of the war, written “inside Nazi Europe,” was published in newspapers of America and in London’s Daily Express yesterday when INS Correspondent Lowell Bennett recounted his experiences of parachuting from a stricken Lancaster bomber over Berlin and his ultimate capture and escape from a prisoner-of-war camp in Germany.

Bennett, 24 years old, was reported missing following the Dec. 2 RAF raid on Berlin, but last Saturday the International News Service bureau in London received from him a letter written apparently from a German P/W camp before his escape.

The arrival of his spectacular story was the first indication that Bennett had escaped. His present whereabouts are unknown, and the channel through which his dispatch was sent was not revealed. In his story Bennett said that “for the moment it is impossible to leave my hiding place, but it is relatively safe. At least I can get some food, some warmth and some rest, which are the only essentials.”

Using the dateline, “Inside Nazi Europe,” Bennett told of his take-off from a Lancaster base in Britain, of encountering flak from Nazi defenses off the Dutch coast and of “searchlights by the hundreds” near Hanover.

Going into the bomb run over Berlin “right through the center of a shield of a hundred shell and rocket explosions, scores of weaving, fingering searchlights and dozens of fighter flares,” Bennett told how one of the bomber’s gunners called of an enemy fighter “climbing toward us from starboard.”

Despite violent evasive action by the pilot the night fighter pressed home his attack, Bennett related.

“Disaster came to us with terrifying suddenness,” he wrote. “The world seemed to burst into an inferno of flame. Our plane shuddered and rocked violently. Cannon shells had ripped into the starboard wing, and both engines exploded into furious fire.

After the engineer switched off the motors, Bennett wrote, the fires continued to spread, flashed to the wing fuel tanks and enveloped the fliers in flames.

The pilot said: “OK boys—bail out—sorry.” Then later, after the crew buckled their parachutes: “Hurry up, boys, can’t hold it much longer.” The crew followed each other into the bombardier’s compartment, tore away their oxygen masks and spilled out into the cold air.”

“I dived out clumsily,” Bennett said. “I pulled the ripcord of my parachute almost immediately, which is the wrong thing to do at a four-mile altitude.”

“Flak spangled the darkness around me. My ears rang with concussion and explosions; my head whirled with the wildness of mad nightmares. Beneath me the fires spread larger and clearer.

“I was certain I was going to drop into one of them. A nearby shell-burst rocked the parachute and for a moment I thought it had been pierced.

“A wild panorama of the Battle of Death—crazed symphony of bombs, planes, guns. A tumultuous jig-saw of color, sound, consuming fear, bewilderment, wonder.

“The bag strapped to me was twisted around my throat, and with frozen fingers I could not move it, so I could not look downwards easily.

“Suddenly, however, I noticed a glint of light reflected on the water off to the side. I realized I was dropping into a lake. I tugged frantically at the parachute to sheer off landwards, but I was too cold. It had been 40 below zero at the height from which I jumped.

“Then suddenly I hit, smashing through thick reeds, and sinking waist-deep into the mud, chest deep in water.”

After releasing the tangled ‘chute and inflating his Mae West, Bennett said he tried to struggle from the mud. What happened in the next few hours was not exactly clear, he said. He thought he was temporarily out of his head and recalled shouting to himself to move, but couldn’t.

Bennett was picked up by two men in a rowboat and taken to a cottage in a German village where two sergeants from a nearby searchlight battery came for him. That afternoon, he wrote, he was taken by truck to a camp near Berlin with two other members of his crew who had been picked up.

“Sometime later, during another transfer, I escaped,” Bennett said. “The details of that and my subsequent travels and my present location must remain secret until I have reached a safer point for dispatch.

“The bigger story from here of aerial destruction inside Germany must await a safer ‘date-line.’”

Bennett, a resident of South Orange, N.J., once before was imprisoned by Germany after the occupation of Paris. He saw action in the Finnish-Russian war and with the French and British armies in France. He accompanied invading U.S. forces to North Africa in 1942 before being assigned to the INS bureau in London.

January 27, 1944

Soldier Vote Bill ‘Fraud’—FDR; Asks Action of Uniform Single Ballot Says Proposal That States Run Absentee Balloting is ‘Meaningless’

WASHINGTON, Jan. 26—President Roosevelt again stepped into the Congressional wrangle over votes for soldiers today with a sharp criticism of the measure passed by the Senate last month and a demand for “adequate legislation.” In a message to Congress, the President described the bill, approved Dec. 3 by the Senate and now pending before the House, as “meaningless.”

The bill to which the President referred and which passed the Senate 42–37, limits Federal action to the distribution and collection of ballots printed by the states. The bill also provides for the use of state absentee voting processes, which, according to an Associated Press story, are of “questionable” value in 18 states.

‘FRAUD ON U.S. PEOPLE’

“I consider such proposed legislation a fraud on soldiers, sailors and Marines now in training and fighting for us and for our sacred rights,” the President declared.

The President’s blunt demand brought Republican guffaws in the House and a cry in the Senate that he had delivered “a direct insult” to the lawmakers.

‘INSULT!’ TAFT SHOUTS

Immediately after the message had been read, Sen. Robert Taft jumped to his feet and shouted: “I resent as one of those who propose state voting for the armed services the designation of that proposal as ‘a fraud.’”

He added that Roosevelt had sent “a direct insult” to both houses of Congress. Taft denounced the proposed Federal ballot declaring that it linked with plans for a fourth term for Roosevelt.

The President endorsed substitute measures proposed by the Democratic Senators Theodore Green (R.I.) and Scott Lucas (Ill.) and by Rep. Eugene Worley (D. Tex.), which would provide simplified Federal ballots on which soldiers could write the name of their choice for President, Vice-President, Senator and Representative. This idea was rejected by the Senate as “unconstitutional and a violation of states’ rights.”

There is nothing in this bill violating the rights of the states,” the President declared. “I am sure I express their (the troops) wishes in this matter and their resentment against the discrimination being practiced against them.”

January 27, 1944

Introducing the Chief's Lady Aides; 14 Women, 9 of them EMs, Here After Serving in North Africa With Gen. Eisenhower

by Charles F. Kiley, Stars and Stripes Staff Writer

WACs were not available in France in 1917 so it is not on the record what "Back Jack" Pershing thought of having female personnel working for him at AEF headquarters.

But 26 years and another war later, Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower has found women to be invaluable at his Supreme Allied Command HQ in Algiers and London.

When American's No. 1 soldier in this part of the world was appointed Allied chief of invasion forces and brought his varsity team back to Britain from the Mediterranean—Montgomery, Spaatz, Bradley, Tedder, et al—he also brought 14 women who occupy positions on his winning combination.

The distaff side of Gen. Eisenhower's office, who recently arrived in London to take up their duties where they left off in Africa, include nine enlisted and three commissioned WACs working as secretaries and stenographers for members of his staff, a WAC captain who is secretary to the general and a British girl who has been the chief's personal secretary and chauffeuse since he first came overseas in May, 1942.

The enlisted WACs, all of whom were among the first contingent of the Corps to reach Africa a year ago, are S/Sgts. Nana M. Rae, New York, and Lillian E. Beck, Philadelphia; Sgts. Rhona M. Laird, Houston, Tex., Marguerite J. Collins, St. Louis; Margaret G. Chick, Ohio, and Sue Sarafian, Detroit; Cpls. Pearlie Hargrave, Minneapolis, Minn.; Helen Hornor, Admore, Okla., and Cecilia M. Morford, Erwin, Tenn.

STOPPED HERE IN '42

The quartet of WAC officers, first of the Corps assigned overseas who were temporarily stationed in Britain in November, 1942, and shortly afterward went to Allied HQ in Africa, are Capts. Mattie A. Pinette, Gen. Eisenhower's secretary from Fort Kent, Me; Ruth L. Briggs, Westerly, R.I.; Martha E. Rogers, Jackson, Miss., and Louise Anderson, Denver, Colo. Capt. Anderson, a shorthand-typist, was the only woman present at the Casablanca conference between President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill.

The lone non-military member of the general's feminine force is Kay Summersby, an Irish-born Londoner, who has held the joint position of personal secretary-chauffeuse for Gen. Eisenhower for almost two years.

With Sgt. James (Mickey) McKeough, ex-New York bellhop and order-chauffeur for the general since the latter was a colonel in Texas, Kay Summersby has driven "the boss" in Britain, Africa, Sicily and Italy. She and Capt. Pinette live together in a London flat.

How do the WACs compare service in North Africa with that in Britain?

In Africa, they maintain, there were sunshine summer-long, swimming in the Mediterranean, no KP, sanctioned dates with officers, informal dress in hot weather, admiration and respect from all and a lot of work done willingly by the Corps.

In Britain, the food is better, dress regulations are more strict, there is no sunshine, soldiers whistle and ask "Does your mother know you're out?" and a lot of work is still done willingly without martyr-to-the-cause attitude.

The enlisted WACs in Africa were permitted to date officers, the girls said, since August. They welcomed the official OK not to date officers exclusively but as a privilege to choose their own company whether it be a general or buck private, they claim. (In Britain, WACs must receive special permission from the COs to date officers, i.e., friends from home, relatives, fiances, etc.)

At least two of the new arrivals, Sgt. Laird and Cpl. Hornor, are engaged to officers they met in Africa. In fact, Sgt. Laird was to have married 2/Lt. D. F. Mullins, of Monroe, La., on Feb. 5, but willingly sacrificed personal life for Army duty when she transferred to Britain. Cpl. Hornor is affianced to 1/Lt. Robert B. Walton, of Forth Worth, Tex.

The one soldier-WAC romance that began in Africa and is being continued in London is that between Mickey McKeough, the general's GI "aide-de-camp," and Cpl. Hargrave. They were engaged Dec. 17 in Algiers and were able to remain together with the transfer of Gen. Eisenhower's HQ. Cpl. Hargrave has driven for Gen. George C. Marshall and Lt. Gen. Omar N. Bradley, chatted with Winston Churchill, and was one of the first women in Bizerte after the city fell to the Allies. She also drove in the Tunis "Victory Day" parade.

In the short time the girls have been in Britain one of them has had a family reunion. Sgt. Laird, a secretary, met her brother a few days ago after a three-year separation.

For Sgt. Rae her transfer presents an opportunity to visit Dumfriesshire, Scotland, which she left 12 years ago to go to America.

Women supposedly are fain to talk but those at SAC have military secrets to keep and nobody has ever said they don't know how.

February 05, 1944

Just Before the Battle, Brother: Don't Be Scared of Being Scared, Veteran Advises

by Charles F. Kiley, Stars and Stripes Staff Writer

Sgt. Sammie Slusher has something to say to American soldiers. His message is aimed chiefly at men as yet untried in combat; men who are asking themselves the same questions he asked before he first saw action.

What is it going to be like? Will I be frightened? How will I react to killing people? Is the Nazi as cunning, as fanatical, as ruthless as they say he is? Are his weapons as good as mine?

Slusher, who went into the North African landings a wide-eyed private and came out of Sicily months later a battle-wise, hard bitten veteran decorated with the Silver Star and Purple Heart, frankly says you will be scared stiff.

Your frame will tremble and your knees will knock. The sweat on your hands will be cold and clammy. Your lips and throat will be dry, your stomach upset and you'll wish you were a couple of thousand miles away somewhere in America. It will be like waiting for the kickoff.

Chances are you'll be surprised how cool you are once you get "in there." You will find you have a lot more know-how than you thought you did.

You also may not have the desire to shoot and kill, but when you see your buddies—like the fellow sitting next to you now—bathed in blood and grotesquely sprawled in death, you are likely to feel differently than you did when you started.

What about the German?

Slusher knows him to be an efficient soldier, so don't sell him short. He is better disciplined, perhaps, than his counterpart in any other army. His weapons and equipment are first class, but no better than yours, for the most part. In fact, you have a big edge on him in that you have many times more in quantity and in more than a few instances in quality.

JERRY'S BEST WEAPONS

The Nazi's most effective weapons that Slusher encountered, and the one you like to have on your side, are his 88 mm. gun and his automatic machine pistol. The first time you hear four 88s sound off you will think they number 500, but you will get used to them—like a number of other things. If you get your hands on a machine pistol you will want to know how it operates so you can use it yourself.

Slusher warns: (1) Don't ever turn your back on a German soldier; (2) don't pick up anything unless you are absolutely sure it isn't wired for "boom."

Jerries may not be as savagely fanatical as the Japs, but Slusher has seen some who preferred to starve themselves rather than eat the food of "fool Americans," others who had to be forced to submit to medical aid.

Most Germans, however, are divided into two categories:

Those who are sick, sore and tired of war, but who will give their best until trapped and then willingly surrender; and those you have to go in and dig out.

The Nazis, according to Slusher's calculations, probably are the most ingenious in laying booby traps. He can substantiate the reports that booby traps were placed on American dead in Africa. They were found also on fountain pens, cigarettes, toilet seats, water canteens, weapons, German cap badges likely to be picked up for souvenirs and a hundred and one other things.

Here are a few tips Slusher thinks soldiers going into action for the first time should paste in their helmets.

Take all the cigarettes, matches and lighters you can carry. You aren't likely to find a PX in a fox hole. You have heard this before and Slusher says it again—socks, foot powder, cleaning patches and entrenching tools are "musts." If you can tote more than one entrenching tool, do so.

SLIT TRENCHES BEST

Slit trenches offer more protection and are more comfortable, if properly dug, than foxholes. Dig one whenever you stop for more than an hour.

Never get up where an enemy can see you. An artillery or mortar barrage inevitably follows. Keep the chin strap on your helmet open as often as possible to prevent concussion in a barrage. Stay away from trees during enemy mortar fire. They are used frequently as aiming points.

Always keep your canteen filled with water and don't use it to wash wounds. Sulfa powder and gauze bandage will safely take care of a wound for as long as two days. In treating wounds of another man, use his aid packet. You might have to use your own sooner than you expect.

A 22-year-old ex-mechanic from Willard, Ohio, Sammie isn't a professional soldier. Well built, blond and soft spoken, he is as homespun as anybody could be who came from a Midwestern town of 2,500. He wants to get home like everybody else, to the wife he married eight months before he came overseas.

And his message to fellow soldiers is sincere.

He knows there are men who will feel as he did before combat. He is certain they will know what to do when they have to do it.

Like the day at Djebel Marata, in Sedjenane Valley, when the main body of which Slusher was a part was held up by a German machine-gun nest. Then a Pfc, Slusher volunteered to take five men and endeavor to know it out. One of his men was wounded in the attack. About 25 yards from the next

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Just Before the Battle, Brother *(continued)*

Slusher saw a head coming up from the emplacement. He ordered a volley, followed by a charge with fixed bayonets.

When they reached the position, eight men, including a lieutenant, came out of the emplacement hands raised in surrender. The German whose curiosity moved him to show himself was found with his head almost blown off.

The following day Slusher was wounded in the leg by shrapnel from an 88. Later he was decorated by Lt. Gen. Patton.

That's Slusher's message and story. If absorbed in the spirit with which it was given, it may save the adjutant a little work in sending cables to next of kin come Invasion Day.

February 05, 1944

Freddie Mills Asks Joe Louis For World Title Bout Here

by Charles F. Kiley, Stars and Stripes Staff Writer

Sgt. Freddie Mills, light heavyweight champion of Great Britain and the British Empire and ranking contender for the vacant British heavyweight crown, yesterday flatly challenged Joe Louis to meet him in a title fight when and if the U.S. Army sends the world heavyweight king to the ETO.

Hailed by many ring experts in America and England as the No. 1 challenger for the Brown Bomber's title, Mills submitted his challenge by cable to Louis in the States. The cable was signed by Mills' manager, Ted Broadribb, who in 1937 steered the luckless Tommy Farr to an unsuccessful title bid against Louis in New York.

The text of the cable, sent to Louis in care of Promoter Mike Jacobs in New York:

"Mills ready and willing to meet you in title match here if proper authorities sanction bout and if Army sends you to England. Suggest all proceeds of bout, if arranged, go to charities determined by Anglo-American committee. Bout tremendous interest to Americans and British forces here."

"SIGNED: TED BROADRIBB."

Broadribb told The Stars and Stripes that he would agree to any terms set up by an Anglo-American promotorial committee, and suggested that all proceeds of this potential million-dollar gate be turned over to charities.

Simultaneous with the challenge came an announcement by the War Department in Washington saying that Louis soon will leave America "to give exhibitions and lectures in theaters of war overseas."

"Mills has been mentioned as a post-war opponent for Louis," Broadribb said. "Freddie is ready for the match now if it can be arranged. If Joe is allowed to defend his title against Mills I think the bout will be a great thing for the American and British forces here. It would make a million dollars for charity."

A 24-year-old sergeant in the RAF, Mills has taken part in more than 150 fights. Since the rugged Bournemouth strong boy came under Broadribb's tutelage in 1941 he has lost two fights in 11, one on a foul and another to Tom Reddington, whom he later whipped in nine rounds.

Mills won his "cruiserweight" crown two years ago when he stopped the aging Len Harvey in two rounds. Harvey also held the heavyweight title but when he retired shortly after his setback the heavy championship retired with him. The only contender for the vacant championship besides Mills is Jack London, whom Mills beat a little over a year ago.

Despite the fact that Mills probably will enter the ring against Louis at 180 or 182 pounds, Broadribb believes he has the style and weapons to succeed where 20 challengers have failed since the Dark Destroyer won the world title from Jim Braddock almost seven years ago.

"Mills will give away 20 pounds to Louis, but will more than make up for the handicap in speed and punching power," Broadribb said. "He has a remarkably long reach for a man of his height—five feet ten inches."

Pointing out that Louis always has had trouble with opponents who fight out of a crouch, particularly Farr, Arturo Godoy and Bob Pastor, Broadribb said that Mills has mastered a weaving style that will bother Sgt. Joe and is equipped to throw more leather than the Bomber has seen in his last three fights combined.

Mills has an army of supporters backing his challenge. He undoubtedly is one of the most popular champions in British ring history, despite only two appearances since he beat Harvey and war-time restrictions which enable only a handful of spectators to witness fights in small clubs. Many of his supporters are American troops before whom he has staged numerous exhibitions on tours of U.S. camps.

However bright the prospects of Mills beating Louis are among the Briton's enthusiasts, the general opinion among most English experts is that Louis would beat Broadribb's colorful protege. Charlie Nash, dean of Fleet Street's boxing writers, figures Louis to win by a knockout. He contends that Mills would wage the fight of his life, but that his aggressiveness, together with his lack of lethal punching power, is made to order for Jolting Joe.

Louis has been out of competitive circulation since he stopped Abe Simon on Mar. 27, 1942. Three months before he kayoed Buddy Baer in one heat. They were Joe's 55th and 56th wins in 57 professional bouts, and brought his total of knockouts to 49.

March 07, 1944

The Chaplain Went Into Battle: Father Tim Won Respect Of His Men the Hard Way

by Charles F. Kiley, Stars and Stripes Staff Writer

There must be a lot of officers in the Army who are loved and respected by soldiers under their commands, but none more so than Father Tim Andrysiak.

Father Tim is a chaplain in the Infantry. He was decorated with the silver Star and Legion of Merit following the North African and Sicilian campaigns.

The story behind his medals is enough to make the Baltimore-born priest one of the most striking personalities in the corps of men who wear the silver-cross insignia. But long before they got around to distributing medals, those who know the broad-shouldered prematurely gray-haired padre of 37 said there wasn't another man quite like Father Tim.

If the Silver Star award came as the result of a single act of "gallantry in action above and beyond the call of duty," soldiers of Father Tim's unit can't recall what it was.

"I doubt if the Army stopped to pick one out," an officer said. "There were too many of them. It could have been for any one of Father Tim's many acts of sheer courage in trying to be where the men needed him most. When it was all over, I'm sure he saw almost as much front-line service as any of us, sharing slit trenches and foxholes, exposing himself to enemy snipers, shell fire and machine-guns."

All this may be a revelation to whomever it was in North Africa that issued an order restricting chaplains from going any closer to the front than the aid stations.

Father Tim doesn't say much about it except that he tried to be with the men when they needed a chaplain. He put in his time at the aid stations administering last rites when necessary, lending a hand to short-handed medical staffs in giving simple first aid, helping the "combat fatigued" get hold of themselves.

JOINED FALLEN SOLDIERS

But when soldiers were falling at the front he went up there with them. Crawling from one stricken man to another, he did whatever he could in a spiritual way for soldiers of all faiths. When the thunder of German guns subsided he talked things over, as soldiers will, with riflemen, machine-gun and mortar crews.

A company commander remembers the day a wide-eyed private, trembling amidst burst of German 88s, recognized Father Tim nearby and exclaimed, "Hell, it can't be so bad if he's up here."

Reluctant to talk of his personal experiences, Father Tim nevertheless admitted he had to become involved in combat to realize fully the soldiers's purgatory in war.

"I doubt very much whether anyone who hasn't had previous combat experience can actually visualize the many things that happen in a real battle," he says. "Everything happens so

suddenly you have to be prepared to quickly adjust yourself to the situation."

A parish priest in Shamokin, Pa., before he put aside his Franciscan robes for a uniform 2 1/2 years ago, Father Tim had to adjust himself the same as every soldier who went into battle.

He came out of his combat experiences with a message for all chaplains still waiting to hear their first enemy shell burst.

"One of the most important jobs a chaplain has is burying the dead," he says. "For the most part he won't have much help. Perhaps an assistant or two, that's all. He should record all the information about a dead soldier he can gather, especially those found without dog tags.

"GET FINGERPRINTS"

"If necessary, fingerprints should be taken. When all data is collected, put it on a piece of wood and place it in a pocket of the soldier's uniform before burying him. This will enable the Graves Registration people to work swiftly and efficiently when they read the preliminary burial area and transport the bodies to the permanent cemetery."

Equipped only with a couple of entrenching tools and a pocket knife, Father Tim and an aide buried 97 men after the Maknassy campaign. The graves they dug were three feet by six feet, just deep enough to bury the men until the Graves Registration company reclaimed the bodies.

Chaplains should be equipped with rubber gloves, Father Tim said, since disease is prevalent wherever there are decaying bodies.

Unlike the chaplains of World War I, whose duties included those that go with special-service, post-exchange and bond-sales work, the padres in this war are not hampered with such extra chores.

As for attendance by soldiers at services, Father Tim said it was almost 100 per cent just before and after a battle. Away from combat areas, attendance fell off, but only about 20 per cent.

Celebrating mass in Africa and Sicily presented a number of problems for Father Tim. Most of the time the altar consisted of a board placed on the shelf of a wadi or on a pair of wooden horses. To prevent enemy reconnaissance planes from noting the white altar linen, he placed the altar under a tree or in a secluded spot.

Father Tim Andrysiak already is a legendary character within his own unit. Unlike the bluff, outspoken Father Duffy of World War I Fighting 69th fame, however, the gentle and sincere Franciscan probably never will be immortalized. But to the soldiers he serves—boys who suddenly become men "down there"—there will never be another man "quite like Father Tim."

March 09, 1944

Publicity a Measurement Of Morale, PROs Learn

by Charles F. Kiley, Stars and Stripes Staff Writer

U.S. combat ground forces have learned a lesson in public relations.

It took several months, during which the roles of some divisions in the North African and Sicilian campaigns went unnoticed, before the lesson was driven home.

Since taking steps to correct its shortcomings in this respect, however, the army is supplying to the American public news of its heretofore unpublicized ground troops at such a rate that it soon may rival other branches of service in the field of public relations.

Correspondents who covered campaigns in the Mediterranean reported that a sure-fire way to sink a soldier's morale was to ignore his division's part in a campaign while playing up another division in the same operation. In most cases this was due largely to reasonable censorship regulations which prohibited the identification of a division in a particular campaign.

Lack of public relations facilities within the division, however, often was responsible for the unit being buried among the anonymous participants.

NINE DIV. GOOD EXAMPLE

Drew Middleton, New York Times correspondent, cited the Ninth Infantry as a striking example of a division which discovered in combat how much public relations meant to the morale of its soldiers. Having followed the Ninth through part of the North African campaign, Middleton told how the division overcame its shortcomings by setting up a highly capable PRO staff without conflicting with its table of organization.

The Ninth had an operating PRO force in the States, but like many Army combat divisions was forced to brush it into an obscure corner because of TO restrictions.

One of the big factors in the African and other campaign successes, the Ninth was further handicapped by censorship which would not allow the division's presence in those campaigns to be revealed. Soldiers seldom see eye to eye with censors, and the Ninth was no exception. The men howled when they started to get papers from home and saw practically everybody but the Ninth in the news.

As a result, the Ninth established what developed into one of the most efficient PRO organizations in the Army, with officers and enlisted men handling public-relations work in addition to their regular duties.

Prime mover behind the renaissance was Lt. Col. Robert W. Robb, of San Francisco, G-2 of the division and long an experienced hand in public relations and newspaper work.

27 PROs IN REGIMENT

Capt. Lindsey Nelson, of Columbia, Tenn., PRO of the division while it was in the States, who had been diverted to special service work during combat, was placed at the head of the new organization. Sgt. John Peel, of Geneva, N.Y., became his assistant.

Each of the three regiments had 24 officers and men designated as PROs, the Times correspondent related. Normally, they were mess officers, adjutants, special service officers and company clerks. Typical examples were Lt. Carl Ruff, liaison and mess officer, who formerly was with the press section of Mutual's WOR, and Cpl. Bob Dunn, who worked for the Philadelphia Record.

These men filed as many as 300 stories a day once they started to roll, telling Mr. and Mrs. America that their son was promoted to sergeant, had received the good-conduct ribbon, Silver Star, Purple Heart and DSC, had been cited for heroism after completing a dangerous mission.

Moreover, when Middleton and other correspondents got around to telling America about the Ninth Division, they were given all the cooperation they needed in gathering their material.

Under the new PRO setup, as far as the Ninth Division is concerned, "no news in bad news."

March 16, 1944

Here Come The Tank Busters! These rolling panthers are poised for attack—ready to unphold the M10s reputation as destroyer of the Panzer packs

by Charles F. Kiley, Stars and Stripes Staff Writer

In America's brand of war the M10 tank destroyer is a relative newcomer, but despite its youth the hard-shelled, high-powered "rolling Panther" already has proved to be one of the most formidable Allied challenges to Axis panzer packs.

The 33-ton tank buster, consisting of a high-velocity, three-inch gun mounted on an M4 (medium) tank chassis, is part of the hard-hitting force of armor massed around the width and breadth of Britain by Allied invasion chiefs.

Untold numbers of these rolling Panthers are poised for the attack that will send them tumbling into the western wall of Hitler's European fortress with the man-sized job of upholding the terrific reputation established by M10 tank destroyers in North Africa, Sicily and Italy.

LONG STRING OF SUCCESESSES

Behind the long string of successes achieved in a comparatively short space of time by this self-propelled tank killer is another in the growing line of World War II heroes—fighter and bomber pilot, aerial gunner, paratrooper, Ranger—and now the tank destroyer commander.

He may be the swaggering, reckless fearless fighter portrayed in Hollywood's "Sahara." In most cases, however, he is more likely to be the average, everyday soldier like Sgt. Carl Suhr, unassuming 26-year-old boss of an M10 in the tank destroyer unit commanded by Lt. Col. Charles Goodwin.

Suhr comes from Omaha, Neb. The elongated, six-feet, three-inch mid-Westerner handled freight for a railroad before the Army called him. Like the rest of his rugged crew, he never saw a tank, let alone a destroyer, until he transferred from a 37 mm. anti-tank unit to Col. Goodwin's TD outfit two years ago.

But big Carl and his men caught on quickly and now there isn't much they don't know about tank busting.

ENGLAND—THE CLASSROOM

Most of their training with M10s has taken place in Britain with the steel-ribbed destroyer as their manual and the rolling English countryside as their classroom.

In the States they learned the rudiments of tank killing in half tracks around the spacious area of Camp Hood, Texas, until they got their hands on M10s last April in Pine Camp, N.Y. That's when they got down to brass tacks.

Training for other jobs in the Army may be more punishing to the body than that of a tank destroyer crew but it is doubtful if any is more complex. As a commander, Suhr has to be an artilleryman, driver, mechanic, rifleman, anti-aircraft gunner,

map reader, camouflage expert, Ranger, radio-telephone operator and reconnaissance expert. Any one of the other four members of his crew must be able to take his place, if necessary, so that they must be skilled operators in every position.

It is not surprising that Suhr wasn't familiar with the M10, either by contact or reputation, until recently. The Panther was the Army's deep, dark secret until a few months ago.

SECRET UNTIL PROVEN EFFECTIVE

It was in operation in more than one sector but nobody talked about it. Only after it was proved in combat as the most effective single weapon devised by U.S. Ordnance experts to meet the weight of lumbering German armor did the Army publicly boast of its new-born pride and joy.

That was after the Panthers decisively outpointed the bigger and heavier Nazi tanks, including some with steel bodies more than seven inches thick which in the early stages of the African campaign were murderous to everything within range and shed enemy shells like a brick wall brushing off BBs.

The M10 is considered a newcomer among war weapons because of its youth. In fact, the first Tank Destroyer Command wasn't formed until 1941 with Brig. Gen. Andrew D. Bruce, then a lieutenant colonel, as its chief. Soon afterward, however, Tank Destroyer Centers spouted all over America. The Forces's motto: "See, Strike, Destroy." the insignia: A snarling black panther crushing a tank in its jaws.

DESIGNED TO OUTSPEED TANK

Looking to the casual eye like another tank, the M10 is nothing of the kind. It is a high-velocity, long-barreled, 3-inch rifle, mounted on the chassis of an M4 tank, is made by Ford and General Motors and designed to outspeed as well as outmaneuver its gigantic opponent and mortal enemy—the tank.

The Panther is as fast as a light tank (30 mph maximum speed), can run circles around a medium tank (although it is powered by the same Diesel engines), packs a lethal punch in a gun that will stop a heavy tank in its tracks with a direct hit and can roll over the roughest terrain with the agility of a jeep.

Ordnance experts have gone on record with the statement that because of its superior velocity (greater than the 75 on the Sherman tank) the M10's gun is eve better than the larger German 88 and can put an armor-piercing shell through any Nazi tank from stem to stern. That includes the 40-ton Mark VI behemoth, one-time ruler of all armored forces.

March 16, 1944

Here Come The Tank Busters! *(continued)*

In combat, tank destroyer commanders like Carl Suhr handle the Panther like a hit-and-run boxer. Instead of standing around trading heavy punches with huge opponents it darts from one spot to another spitting as many shells at a target as it can before enemy guns are able to get range and flush them from concealment.

Driving an M10 is just about as complicated as driving a car once you get used to it, according to Suhr's driver, Cpl. Henry Mainord, 30-year-old "daddy" of the crew. A salty Texan from the township of Bryan, Mainord says it took him about as long to handle a Panther as it did for him to pilot a Ford, although it isn't as easy as it sounds.

You have a lever in each hand. When you pull one it stops the track on that side and speeds up the other one, causing the destroyer to veer off. Working them back and forth you keep the Panther weaving from side to side. Keep them together and you follow a straight path. The destroyer has five speeds forward and no brakes. To show down you shift to a lower gear by double-clutching.

INTER-COM SYSTEM IS USED

Mainord occupies the left side seat in the forward part of the destroyer's bowels. Beside him is Pvt. Ray Braegger, of Providence, Utah, assistant driver and radio operator. Behind them and just inside the turret ride Cpl. Matthew Tomiczek, of Detroit, gunner; Pvt. Johnny Rogers, of Clyde, Kan., loader, and Suhr, the commander.

When the forward hatches are down the driver and radio operator see ahead through rectangular periscope windows. An inter-com system keeps the crew in contact with one another.

When the Panther is on the road Suhr rides astride the turret, issuing commands and instructions through a hand microphone. The radio system also keeps destroyers in touch with other Panthers as well as battalion headquarters.

Besides operating in formation with other destroyers, M10 crews are equipped to wage private wars of their own if they get separated from the battalion. Enemy forces that try to storm a solitary Panther discover they have a cat by the tail.

THE LOAD IT CARRIES

The inside of an M10 doesn't look as if it would hold much when five men are aboard, but it carries armor-piercing and HE ammunition for the 3-inch gun and air-cooled 50-caliber machine-gun and ammunition for anti-aircraft defense, four carbines and an '03 rifle and hundreds of rounds of small arms ammunition, assorted fragmentation, smoke and incendiary grenades; smoke pits, first aid kit, 40 gallons of Diesel oil, flare pistols, 15 gallons of water, C and C rations for all, bed rolls and tools. On the outside are camouflage

nets and 26 "growses," used as chains to help a Panther get its tracks out of deep mire.

Like almost every vehicle in the Army, tank destroyers bear names which only an American would think of. Suhr's M10 is called the Anxious Virgin. There are others like Agnes the Ape, Apace, Annihilator, Annapola, Bull, Betty Boop, Cheerio, Chariot and Canuck.

Suhr and his crew are fully aware of the dangers of tank busting, but do not throw their weight around because their business is, or will be, risky. Nobody has to tell them the second front is going to be tough. They had a capsule taste of the preliminaries a few weeks ago during amphibious exercises. They were on LCTs for four days and nights before embarking on a ten-hour cruise to an objective. Everybody got seasick.

JUST PART OF PANZER PACK

If the world called the war off tomorrow it would not be disappointing to Suhr, the freight-handler from Nebraska; Mainord, the Texan; Braegger and Rogers, the farmers from Utah and Kansas; Tomiczek, the radio assembly worker from Michigan. But they have come this far to do their job and they are ready.

While commanders like Suhr and their M10s furnish the big wallop for a tank destroyer battalion there are other armored stingers rounding out the streamlines, U.S. version of a mobile, hard-hitting panzer pack. For instance, the 1 1/2-ton security trucks with 50s, armored jeeps with 30s and 50s, motorcycles for messengers and other armored vehicles still on the Army's secret list.

Still the rolling Panthers are the big boys with the KO punch and commanders like Carl Suhr are ready to get in there and throw it.

May 1, 1944

The Soldier's Vote: What You Can and Can't Write

The soldier's vote is important. So is his opinion, not only on political issues but any other controversial subject. The new Federal Voting Law safeguards that opinion from being misused.

Under this law, effective Apr. 1, persons in and out of the U.S. armed forces are prohibited from conducting polls of soldier opinion with reference to the choice of candidate for election. The law also prohibits any other poll of soldier opinion, unless specifically authorized by the War Department.

This restriction is aimed chiefly at civilian agencies, such as newspapers, but is also directed at servicemen for their guidance. One of the main reasons for the restriction is military security. Enemy agents are not particularly interested in an individual soldier's opinion but they are anxious to know how a group, or the Army as a whole, feels.

You may have heard of or read a story which told how soldiers feel about this candidate or that issue. But you won't any more.

There is no restriction on your private opinion and you can write about it, shout it and do anything you want with it. You may not, however, say your opinion is shared by anyone else.

The new voting law further restricts the dissemination to members of the armed forces of political argument or propaganda sponsored by the Government and which may be designed to affect the result of an election for President, Vice-President, Presidential elector, member of the Senate and House of Representatives, unless it conforms to the following:

1—Newspapers and magazines of general circulation in the U.S., for which the preference by soldiers has been established through a method determined by the Secretary of war, may be distributed to soldiers.

2—Books of general circulation in the U.S. also may be distributed. Any books purchased by the Army after Apr. 1 for distribution among soldiers, however, must be free of any or all political argument or propaganda which may affect elections for Federal offices mentioned above.

3—A political address may be re-broadcast over Government-controlled radio stations provided that equal time, if requested, is given to other political parties having candidates for President in at least six states.

4—Movies, radio broadcasts and servicemen's newspapers and magazines—sponsored or paid for by the Government may be distributed to the armed forces if they are NON-PARTISAN and NON-POLITICAL. The impartial coverage as news or information of public events and persons in public life is not curtailed or prohibited. (The Stars and Stripes has followed that policy every since it commenced publication Apr. 17, 1942.

If any such presentation allots space or time to editorial comment or other argumentative matter supporting a political party which has a candidate for President in at least six states, an equal amount of time or space must be allotted in the same issue to similar matter concerning each other political party.

5—Any individual or corporation, other than a Government-owned or Government-controlled corporation or political committee, may send to any member of the armed forces letters, magazines, newspapers or other literature addressed personally to the soldier and paid for him by the individual or group sending it. Unless such material contains information which may be of value to the enemy, it will not be removed from mail by Army censors or any other Army employees.

These restrictions have little do do with the physical execution of a vote by a soldier but are published for his general information concerning the vote.

May 3, 1944

Pyle, GI Joe of Correspondents, Honored for His Soldier Stories Gets Pulitzer Prize, But Regards Infantryman's Praise Equal Tribute

by Charles F. Kiley, Stars and Stripes Staff Writer

Ernie Pyle, Scripps-Howard columnist for more than 300 newspapers, who recently arrived in London from Italy, yesterday received two messages.

One told the diminutive gray-haired newsman he had been awarded a Pulitzer Prize for "distinguished correspondence during the year." The other, contained in a letter written by an American infantryman at Anzio to a friend in the U.S. and forward to Pyle, described the GI Joe of war correspondents as "the best reporter in the whole damn world" and wondered "how a dried-up little guy like that gets around so much."

Pyle wasn't sure which of the tributes he appreciated most.

The 43-year-old newsman, who probably has filed more copy on the American soldier at the front than any four others, was one of five named for the Pulitzer Prize awards.

The others were Daniel DeLuce of the Associated Press, who reported from Poland, Greece, Burma, North Africa, Italy and Yugoslavia, for "a distinguished example of telegraphic reporting on international affairs," AP's Frank Filan for photography on the war fronts, Henry J. Kaskell for editorials in The Kansas City Star, and author Martin Flavin for his novel, "Journey in the Dark."

Byron Price, director of press censorship in Washington, was given special mention for "creation and administration of a newspaper and radio code."

Probably the smallest of war correspondents. Ernie Pyle has been closer to the soldier himself than any other writer. He started to report the war to America during the Battle of Britain in the winter of 1940-41. With the exception of two brief visits to the U.S., he has been at it ever since, covering the AEF in Northern Ireland early in 1942 and later the troops in Africa, Sicily and Italy.

Pyle's reports of a soldier's life, written while living, marching and eating with troops in combat zones, earned for him the title of "the GI's own reporter." His book, "Here Is Your War," edited from columns written overseas, has sold more than a half-million copies. The book also is being used as a basis for a motion picture portraying the life of an infantryman.

Asked to play a leading role in the film, Pyle refused on the grounds that he preferred to stick to the Scripps-Howard job he has held for 21 years.

A reporter with honest and outspoken opinions, Pyle warned America two months after the African invasion not to expect "a walkaway" with small losses. He echoed the soldiers' own belief that it would take months of fighting for U.S. forces to gain the experience the enemy started with.

Pyle came to Britain several weeks ago from the Italian front in order to be on hand for the next show. His bed-roll is packed.

May 5, 1944

Best Guns, and Plenty of ‘Em, Set for Invasion, General Says

by Charles F. Kiley, Stars and Stripes Staff Writer

American weapons never before used in any theater of war and constituting the best equipment military science has produced thus far, are part of the invasion ordnance massed in the British Isles, Brig. Gen. Henry B. Sayler, ETOUSA's chief ordnance officer, declared yesterday in a report issued through The Stars and Stripes to American combat troops.

“When the day for forthcoming operations arrives,” Sayler reported, “every American soldier taking part may be assured that his weapons, ammunition, tanks and vehicles are superior, or at least equal, to those of the enemy. There isn't a single item of ordnance inferior in any way to its counterpart in the German Army. Some of the ordnance will be used in action for the first time after being developed and thoroughly tested at our proving grounds in America.”

Emphasizing that this was no pep talk intended to boost morale, Sayler said soldiers standing ready for action had a right to know how their ordnance stacked up with that to be used against them.

There were German weapons used in North Africa which proved to be superior to anything the U.S. had in the same line when “we were young in the game,” the general stated. The all-purpose 88mm. gun was one. But home-front production has developed a gun to beat the 88 in quality and quantity.

“One thing we do not have is a secret weapon,” Sayler said. We do have the finest artillery and ammunition with higher explosive charges, small arms with performance better than anything the enemy has used. If you want to call those secret weapons, you can. A good deal of our ordnance, too, has been improved. These improvements combine the best features of our own weapons and those captured from the enemy.”

The ordnance chief said that ordnance depots in the British Isles were ready to maintain an endless stream of ordnance supplies to invasion forces. Mobile units are equipped to repair damaged ordnance as close to the front lines as possible.

From Col. Joel B. Holmes, deputy ordnance chief, came a report stressing the importance of ordnance and revealing that over half of all tonnage from America is ordnance. Holmes said invasion forces would have enough ammunition at their immediate disposal alone to last several weeks.

“Enemy weapons are good,” Holmes said, “but still they haven't anything to match the American M1 rifle, carbine, the light tank and medium tanks, 105mm howitzer and 155mm Long Tom artillery piece, aerial artillery bazooka and .50 cal. Browning machine gun. They have a bazooka, copied from us, but ours is superior.”

May 11, 1944

Giant Trucking System Now Functions in U.K.

by Charles F. Kiley, Stars and Stripes Staff Writer

Great Britain, a nation geared to handle commercial transportation primarily by railway, is getting a taste today of the large-scale motor truck transport prevalent in the U.S.

The example is furnished by one of the largest and busiest motor transport networks in the world, a big business that each week dispatches thousands of white-starred U.S. army trucks laden to the hilt with invasion men and material to points all over the 93,963 square miles of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The network belongs to the Road Traffic Control branch of the Army's Transportation Corps which every week steers hundreds of convoys around the United Kingdom to move and supply the every-growing AEF in Britain.

That's a lot of trucks and a lot of cargo. A convoy of 2 1/2-ton "six-by-sixes" with a normal interval of 60 yards between trucks and stretching from New York to Denver gives you an idea of the American truck traffic alone rolling through and around an area as big as Oregon or one-third the size of Texas.

Furthermore, it is no accident that these convoys, ranging from quarter-ton jeeps to mammoth prime movers, can travel hundreds of miles over Britain's narrow, twisting roads and congested areas without a hitch in traffic to reach their destinations within minutes of estimated times of arrival.

For behind each convoy is a productive and punctual system of road traffic control born of necessity since the outbreak of war by the British and since adopted by the Americans.

TORPEDO SHIPMENT STARTED IT

Said to be the incident that caused the Transportation Corps to organize its road traffic control was an order from Adm. Harold F. Stark more than a year ago. He wanted a special shipment of torpedoes rushed from a depot in England to a port. Railroads were jammed. Not enough trucks available. Somehow, the torpedoes were delivered on time, but the trouble it took was so great that it was apparent a new system was necessary.

Brig. Gen. Frank S. Ross, transportation chief, made the changes, organized all unassigned truck battalions and convoys under his control. The move marked the first time in any theater that all land and sea transportation was placed under one man.

The secret behind the convoys is the road traffic control system.

A combination of common sense and strict compliance to orders, the system is the simple explanation of why convoys are able to make swift deliveries without traffic jams. The same system of road traffic control will be carried into continental Europe to expedite movements of all Allied invasion vehicles.

The system divided the U.K. into seven regions, each region controlling traffic passing through it. With thousands of British trucks operating at the same time as those of the Americans it was natural for transport offices of both armies to work hand in glove so that both knew where each and every convoy was at any given time.

HOW IT WORKS

This is a typical example: A truck battalion commander receives orders to deliver material from Liverpool to Norwich. His first stop brings him to his regional transportation officer, submitting (1) authority for action, date and destination of the convoy; (2) number and type of vehicles to be used; (3) strength of personnel in the convoy; (4) present location of truck battalion, starting point, time and date of desired departure; (5) petrol requirements en route.

Like the tourist who gets his automobile vacation route mapped by Sunoco, the convoy CO then is able to sit back and wait for the Road Traffic Control office to furnish instructions.

Steps taken by Road Traffic Control:

1—Contacts British Army transport authorities in the same office for the purpose of collaborating on the Liverpool-to-Norwich plans.

2—Information discussed includes size and weight of vehicles and weight of cargo in order to pick a route over suitable roads and which will not take heavy vehicles over light bridges or cause them to meet short overhead-pass obstructions.

3—Plans the route so that the convoy will avoid other convoys and as much heavy traffic as possible between Liverpool and Norwich.

4—Instructs convoy CO how far he will travel each day and the point where he will halt if it is an overnight trip, average speed to be maintained throughout and interval (usually 60 yards) between vehicles, where refueling stations are located.

5—Arranges overnight billeting facilities for personnel, usually at a British camp.

6—Contacts provost marshals in each region through which convoy will pass to provide MP escort from start of trip to finish. MPs escort convoys only to the borders of their regions. If the planned route takes the convoy through metropolitan cities like London, Birmingham, Glasgow and Liverpool civil police are notified to furnish cycle escort through the cities.

May 13, 1944

The Army's Better Half Celebrates; WACs Proudly Look Back on Their 1st Year in ETO

by Charles F. Kiley, Stars and Stripes Staff Writer

Starting a gala weekend of festivity, pomp and parades, upward of 4,000 WACs in England lifted canteen cups yesterday to toast the first anniversary of the Corps' arrival in the ETO, and together with 65,000 other GI Janes in America, Italy, Egypt, North Africa, Hawaii, New Caledonia, India and Australia, those in this theater tomorrow will make it a double celebration by observing the second birthday of the women's half of the Army.

It was on May 12, 1943, that five Janes and six officers disembarked from a transport in the U.K. to pave the way for the arrival two months later of the first full-strength WAC contingent in Britain.

With dignity and firm morale, the Corps grew in numbers and reputation in the ensuing year to become as much a part of operations in the European theater as any GI outfit in the Army. Moreover, as the WAC grew, the ranks of resentful dogfaces diminished until today there are few still reluctant to admit that Jane as given a tremendous lift to the AEF in Britain.

For the record of U.S. veterans in the ETO, herewith a first annual report on the WAC:

On performance, the WACs have proved themselves. The evidence lies in the frank admission by Army commanders and soldiers alike that there are not nearly enough of them over here.

Like the rest of the Army in general, that portion of it in Britain a year ago was openly apprehensive over the arrival of traditionally emotional and unpredictable females, supposedly geared to fit into a war machine girding for the biggest military operation in history.

But GI Jane moved in, with Capt. (now Lt. Col.) Anna W. Wilson, trim 34-year-old ex-educator from Studio City, Cal., hand-picked to direct the WAC army in the ETO.

Jane came in luxury liners and cargo boats, seasick but upright, to ETOUSA headquarters, to all branches of the Air Forces, to services mushrooming from SOS such as Ordnance, QM, Transportation, Chemical Warfare, Engineers. She plotted, teleprinted, operated switchboards, typed, filed, made maps, assessed combat films, cooked, nursed and gave "shots" to jittery Joes, drove jeeps and trucks, handled intelligence records, sweated out missions from control towers and handled many more of the 239 types of jobs for which WACs train.

On parade, the smartness and precision of the Janes caused the eyes of hardened line troops to go up and down like elevators. For many soldiers, first glimpses of U.S. women in uniform came in England; they had to admit the gals looked

good. British and Canadian officers, long proud of their own girls in service, agreed that the WACs in review were hard to beat.

LITTLE GLAMOR

Whatever they were told or dreamed about like in the ETO, Col. Wilson's Army quickly discovered there wasn't much glamor in it.

The clammy English dawn made them shiver in heatless Nissen huts and concrete barracks as much as any Joe. Only the few hundred working in London and one or two other sections were billeted in more comfortable quarters. Discipline was strict, more so than in the soldier's Army. Passes weren't too plentiful. And there was mud.

Nevertheless, the WACs managed to have fun. No candidates for Roxy's chorus or Petty pin-up girls, many of them had more dates than they ever had in their lives. They dated Tom, Dick and Harry, American and British, at first; soon favored their own soldiers and settled down to a GI "steady."

In 30 cases, romance blossomed into marriage. Two WAC officers wed Britons, another an American officer, while 27 Janes took GI Joes for better or worse. Many were reunited with home-town sweethearts, a few with husbands in service.

Regulations prohibiting Janes from dating officers prevailed, but this was one rule the WACs and brass frequently side-slipped.

On or off duty, there weren't many essential differences between Joes and Janes. The WACs short-sheeted bunks in their huts, wore boy friends' insignia on their fatigues and maroon robes, fastened uniform buttons on the inside with captains' bars, ore pilot and gunner wings for bracelets.

They also referred to an unpopular officer in much the same manner as a soldier.

The WACs also had a Liberator, the Pallas Athene—The GI Jane, named after them, sponsored two war orphans, often spoke before Anglo-American groups, organized choirs and Bible classes. The Joes were glad, too, that Jane was around to brighten up Aero clubs and canteens, satisfy their craving for jitterbugging.

Proudest of all WAC boasts in their first year in the ETO has been their good conduct. Closely observed by ever-anxious gossipers, nearby and 3,000-odd miles away, Col. Wilson's Janes set a laudable standard for staying out of trouble, one that probably is not equalled by a unit of 4,000 in any branch of service at home or abroad.

Informed of a recent press report that only three AWOLs were on the books in three battalions, Col. Wilson last week

May 13, 1944

The Army's Better Half Celebrates... *(continued)*

spoke up and said there "never has been a single case" where a girl has been "absent" from her unit from more than three or four hours, and the latter usually because a train was missed.

Another gilt-edged record was filed last September when the WAAC abandoned the role of stepsister, dropped a "A" and became an integral part of the Army with soldier's privileges of insurance, mail, dependency allotments and overseas pay. It also gave to those who wanted it a chance to get out of the Corps and get a trip back home.

Of about 50,000 in the Corps at the time, 30 per cent (14,950) took the chance. Of 557 in England, however, only 17 percent (33) went home, some because of failures to meet WAC physical requirements, some because they just plain wanted out.

The possibility of Jane climbing the commissioned ranks has been slim, due to the limited quota of officer candidates allotted to Col. Wilson's army. Only four have gone home to OCS, and two already are second lieutenants. One of them is Violet Bachman, of Long Island, N.Y., one of those first five to land in Britain. Only two warrant officers have been appointed, one of them Scottish-born Nana Rae, who with five WAC officers and an handful of Janes followed Gen. Eisenhower from Algiers to London.

Col. Oveta Culp Hobby, chief of all WACs, once said, "I predict that all America will be proud of them."

The ETO is ready to cast an affirmative vote after the first year.

May 22, 1944

Top Notchers Make Up Army's Band; Its EM Tooters Sport Weighty Galaxy of Hash Marks

by Charles F. Kiley, Stars and Stripes Staff Writer

When the U.S. Army band, presently on tour in England after 10 months in the Mediterranean, showed up to serenade troops in at an ETO installation last week, a soldier in the audience remarked it was the finest band he ever heard.

The wide-eyed Joe also concluded, after noting the collection of hash marks among the musicians, that a good percentage of those old soldiers who never die are in the U.S. Army band.

Both observations were natural, since the Army's No. 1 band occupies a position among the most prominent of all military bands and the combined years of service among its 86 members must be close to 1,000.

The band is an outgrowth of a unit formed in France in world War I by Gen. John J. Pershing. It was reorganized in 1922 and in the ensuing 22 years of unbroken service has traveled upward of a million miles on tours of the U.S. and foreign countries, has played at five Presidential inaugurals, has broadcast over national networks, has given public concerts in Washington and entertained more royalty than there is in exile.

TEN 'ORIGINALS' LEFT

Ten of those with the present organization were in the original band when it assembled in 1922. Fifteen are veterans of the last war and at least five are crowding one another for the title of oldest of old soldiers, with 27 years' service.

The Army's representative band is good. And with the exception of the bandmaster, 49-year-old Capt. Thomas F. Darcy, Jr., and the assistant bandmaster, W/O Hugh J. Curry, the unit is composed entirely of enlisted men from the regular Army.

One of the few Army outfits that wears uniforms other than standard GI, the band's wardrobe includes a dress uniform of cadet grey with white stripe down the side of the trousers, white belt and white border on a black-visored cap. The bandsmen wear the conventional GI dress when not appearing at official functions.

Capt. Darcy says the band is like a big family. Sixty per cent of the musicians are married, most of them live in and around Washington and three are the fathers of four children.

Among other things, the band also claims brother and father-son acts. The brothers are Sgts. Anthony B. and Edmund E. Korcel, clarinetists from Johnstown, Pa. Tony has been in the band for 11 years, Ed for five.

Sgt. Charles D. Hershey and his son Karl are drummers. Hershey senior, veteran of the 1917-18 stay in France, was beating the drums in the SS Leviathan orchestra in 1929 when the Army band went to Spain to play at a couple of expositions. Hershey got acquainted with the band on the way home and re-enlisted.

Capt. Darcy, a 22-year-old bandleader of the First Division's 18th Infantry band in 1917, says a bandsman's job in the Army in war time is anything but soft lights and sweet music. He came home from France with the Silver Star and Cluster, Purple Heart, Verdun Medal and French Fouregere, which make up a lot of decorations for a so-called "stretcher bearer." Seven of 35 men in that 18th Infantry band were killed in action.

Since he took over the leadership of the Army band in 1925, Capt. Darcy and his men have collected one of the finest musical libraries of band music in existence.

It includes two notable compositions by Darcy, the U.S. Army March (written for the President's 1940 inauguration and published by Irving Berlin) and the National Geographic Society March.

The occasions at which the band annually appeared until it came overseas and which the men favor most are the ceremonies at the tomb of the Unknown Soldier and on Gen. Pershing's birthday, Sept. 18, at Walter Reed General Hospital in Washington.

Not having missed a Presidential inauguration since that of Calvin Coolidge, the band naturally would like to be back for the next one. Meanwhile, it rolls by truck around the U.K., playing for someone who may be the Unknown Soldier of World War II or the President in 1964.

May 26, 1944

He Was a One-Man Army

by Charles F. Kiley, Stars and Stripes Staff Writer

They found him face down on the side of a hill in the Sedjenane Valley.

Bullets had pierced his head and mouth and ripped across his waist. Nearby were the lifeless bodies of French Commando scouts who fell with him in a suicidal attempt to storm a German machine-gun nest.

That was the end of “Molotoff,” the United States Ninth Infantry Divisions’s one-man army in North Africa and one of the most fantastic personalities of the war. Incredible as the heroic feats and shenanigans of this unbridled soldier may seem they have been substantiated by men who knew him and fought with him in the famous fighting Ninth.

Molotoff’s name was really Karl Warner. He was a private, hated and loved by officers and fellow soldiers alike who long regarded him as the poorest example of a man in uniform. But before he fell dead on that Tunisian hill, Molotoff proved himself one of the most efficient, courageous and fearless soldiers in this or any other army; a soldier whose fabulous story may make him the Sgt. York of World War II.

A boastful, loud-mouthed “wise guy,” Molotoff refused to be subjected to discipline. He always wore outlandish uniforms and never completed a route march. He fell asleep on guard, deserted his post and talked his way free of two courts-martial. He won fabulous sums in crap games, bitched about Army life from reveille to taps, was insubordinate to all ranks and was AWOL so many times nobody knew the actual count.

There wasn’t a rule in the book Molotoff didn’t tear up into little pieces.

On the other hand, Molotoff performed incredible feats in combat, albeit by his own peculiar methods. He had little respect for Army routine and red tape, yet never was known to get out of hand under fire. Whereas he never questioned combat orders, he was apt to raise hell when a colonel told him to get a haircut.

With the same persuasive measures that saved him from courts-martial he bluffed an entire Italian company into surrender. He exposed himself to enemy fire on numerous occasions to direct artillery, and once saved his company from being trapped by a superior enemy force.

Frequently disappearing on unauthorized solo expeditions for days, Molotoff located enemy positions that regular observers had failed to find. He captured an Arab spy and was the first of his outfit to scale the wall of a besieged fort, where he found upward of 40,000 francs and distributed them among his buddies.

Moreover, he killed more than a score of enemy officers and men in hand-to-hand combat on scouting trips, but he never discussed it.

That was Molotoff, about whom one of his officers is reported to have said: “There is scarcely anything you could write about him

that would not be true,” and about whom reports are just reaching Britain from Mediterranean sources.

Although his name was Warner, nobody knew him by that. It was “Molotoff” at roll call. Even the battalion is said to have consulted his service record to find his true identity. It was Molotov from the moment another soldier pinned the tag on him at Fort Bragg.

TALK OF THE OUTFIT

About his civilian life little is known except that he lived alone in a boarding house on 44th Street in Manhattan, was known as “Curly” around the news-stand at 46th and Broadway, seemed to have been all over the U.S.A., claimed to have been on familiar terms with radio and screen stars, did business for and with racketeers, and once said he was “part Russian and part Jewish.”

But from the day he arrived as a sad selectee at Fort Dix, clad in camel-hair coat, pearl-gray clacks and white silk muffler, and hatless until he was killed last April, the escapades of the 24-year-old blond, curly-haired and handsome Molotoff were discussed more by the division that all the rest of the war.

Another known characteristic was Molly’s fetish for gambling. He favored dice, but anything would do, with stakes ranging from five cents to five hundred dollars. After one session his pockets bulged with \$1,200. Three days later he lost it to civilian sharpies in a pool room. On another occasion he dropped \$450 in half an hour. But his credit was always good. He was never known to welsh or stall off payment of a loan.

Officers and non-coms agreed it was impossible to enforce discipline with the unruly Molotoff. At Fort Dix he was seen wearing civilian clothes for several days after induction while other recruits were wearing GI. At Fort Bragg he was picked up frequently by MPs, sporting an officer’s blouse, tailor-made trousers and tan silk shirt.

His disregard for training programs, desertion of his post on guard duty, refusal to wear a helmet, constant brawls and loud boasts eventually made Molotoff disliked from top to bottom from high-ranking officers to the men with whom he lived. Everybody said he would be a handicap in combat, and a transfer to move him elsewhere would have received unanimous approval.

Strangely, Molotoff never gold-bricked on KP and nobody understood why he did even more than his share of work in the kitchen.

It was in the early days of the North African campaign that Molotoff the misfit, found his place in the Army and a warm spot in the hearts of the men although his unique actions continued on even a larger scale. At Port Lyautey he turned up without a bit of equipment, and after his platoon sergeant ordered him to get some, he returned wearing a Navy raincoat, turtle-neck sweater and white hat and carrying an M1 rifle.

May 26, 1944

He Was a One-Man Army

by Charles F. Kiley, Stars and Stripes Staff Writer

OUT OF UNIFORM—AND HOW!

Through the French Moroccan, Maknassy and Sedjenane battles he appeared at various times in French scarlet and blue capes, in an armored soldier's "zoot suit," in an Italian beret with a huge, black plume, and with an Italian officer's belt in the style of a Sam Brown, and always armed with two pistols and a carbine.

In Port Lyautey he quickly made friends with the Arabs. In short order he had them build him a tent, furnished it with rugs, tapestries, lamps, pictures, a cot and mattress, table and chair. Furthermore, they dug his foxholes and brought him fruit, wine and eggs. Never a close associate or confidant of any one person, Molotoff reigned in his tent alone.

It was at Port Lyautey, too, that Molotoff acquired his most prized possession—a pair of French field glasses, which attracted attention from every officer he met. They tried to buy the glasses, threatened to take them from him, attempted to make trades. But Molotoff said, "No." He removed them from an enemy officer whom he had killed in his first day in combat—and he aimed to keep them.

Later, those glasses were to serve many useful purposes. While he was attached to a rifle company, a great deal of his self-appointed service was done for the artillery, extremely dangerous observation of enemy positions from vantage points less courageous men would not attempt to reach.

The outstanding feat of this "poorest example of a soldier" occurred at Station de Sened, where Molotoff's platoon was covered by a company of Italian infantry dug in on higher ground.

By this time he was regarded as the company's best scout. Molotoff took with him an Italian interpreter, and without thought of personal risk openly walked up the hill toward the Italian position. The enemy thought it was a surrender and withheld fire. Two men came out to meet the intrepid Molotoff.

With his gift of gab, Molotoff made them believe they were surrounded by a superior American force. The Italians, however, could not surrender, they said, until they were ordered to do so by a colonel who was then in the rear. Accompanied by his company commander, Molotoff went back to the Italians a second time, and when they stood fast, he was first to charge the defended ground and unarm 140 men without firing a shot.

The following day Molotoff told his platoon sergeant he was going up ahead "to see what the score is." Standing atop a hill 800 yards from his company and waving his automatic above his head, he shouted "Finish la guerre, finish la guerre." The sound echoed over the hills while enemy machine guns sprayed the area with searching fire.

UNWANTED? HARDLY!

Crouched between two boulders, Molotoff made note of the gun positions, relayed the information to the artillery and in a short time

the enemy emplacements were wiped out. A few of the shells landed short, endangering Molotoff's company. He complained loudly to an artillery officer, who rewarded him with a curt remark about his crazy-quilt uniform. The artillery, nevertheless, tried to have Molotoff transferred as an observer, but the infantry wouldn't hear of it.

In Maknassy he was credited with saving the company from being trapped by reporting an enemy force, captured an Arab spy possessing 900 francs of Nazi-controlled Vichy French money, and made his way alone through a minefield to locate abandoned American equipment, including mortars and Tommy guns.

The curtain came down on Molotoff's colorful, though brief, Army career shortly afterward in the Sedjenane Valley push. It came down before he fulfilled an ambition of supplying every man in the company with a German machine pistol.

He was part of a file assigned to maintain contact between his unit and a French force on the left flank. That job was too dull for a man of Molotoff's caliber. He passed on word that he was going up with the French Ghoums to see "what the score was." He reported a German machine-gun nest and was last seen on his way—overseas cap, pistols and carbines—with a patrol of the French Commandos.

His body was discovered by the French, and reported to an American liaison officer. They found a Nazi flag in Molotoff's hip pocket, but his prized field glasses were gone.

There were two charges pending against this "poorest example of a man in uniform" when he was killed. They were dropped from the record in accordance with Army policy.

Even in death, he beat the rap.

When reports that Molotoff was dead spread like wildfire, the men who once scorned the ebullient smart aleck were genuinely affected.

"It's a dirty trick on him," one of his buddies is said to have remarked. "That's what he lived for—more courts-martial to talk his way out of."

An officer added: "I didn't think it was possible for anybody to kill him. He was fearless."

That was the mysterious Molotoff, whose spirit probably will live as long as the men with whom he fought are alive, who was awarded posthumously the Silver Star "for brave and daring actions... reflecting the highest tradition of military service," whose body now lies in a shallow grave on a roadside in Sedjenane or in a military cemetery between Gafsa and Mateur.

Nobody knows for sure.

May, 1944

Mototoff from Broadway

by S/Sgt. Charles F. Kiley, Stars and Stripes Staff Writer

(edited version which appeared in the New York Times Magazine in May, 1944)

They found him face down on the side of a hill in the Sedjenane Valley. Nearby were the lifeless bodies of French Commando scouts who fell with him in a suicidal attempt to storm a German machine-gun nest. This was the end of “Molotoff,” the United States Ninth Infantry Divisions’s one-man army and one of the most fantastic personalities of the war. His incredible story was revealed by wounded men of his outfit on their way to America from the Mediterranean battlefronts.

His name was really Karl Warner, but on the corner of Broadway and Forty-sixth Street, his New York hangout, he was known as “Curly.” He was a private, hated and loved by officers and fellow soldiers alike, who for a long time regarded him as the poorest example of a man in uniform. But before he fell dead on that Tunisian hill, Molotoff proved himself one of the most efficient, courageous and fearless soldiers in this or any other army.

A boastful, loud-mouthed “wise guy,” Molotoff was allergic to discipline. He always wore outlandish uniforms and never completed a route march. He fell asleep on guard, deserted his post and talked his way free of two courts-martial. He won fabulous sums in crap games, squawked loudly about Army life from reveille to dawn, was insubordinate to all ranks and went AWOL.

But in combat, Molotoff performed incredible feats, albeit by his own peculiar methods. He never was known to get out of hand under fire and he subjected himself willingly to combat orders, but he raised hell when a colonel told him to get a haircut. He bluffed an entire Italian company into surrender with the same persuasiveness that saved him from courts-martial. He exposed himself to enemy fire on numerous occasions to direct artillery, and once saved his company from being trapped by a superior enemy force.

Frequently disappearing on solo expeditions for days, Molotoff located enemy positions that regular observers had failed to find. He captured an Arab spy and was the first of his outfit to scale the wall of a besieged fort, where he found more than 40,000 francs which he distributed among his buddies. He killed more than a score of enemy officers and men in hand-to-hand combat on scouting trips.

No one knew him by his real name. It was always Molotoff at roll call. It was Molotoff from the moment another soldier pinned the tag on him at Fort Bragg after deciding Warner was “a radical.” About his civilian life little is known except that he lived alone in a boarding house on Forty-fourth Street in Manhattan, that he hung out at his own special corner of Times Square, seemed to have been all over the United States, claimed to have been on familiar terms with radio and screen stars, did business for and with racketeers, and once said he was “part Russian and part Jewish.”

It was in the early days of the North African campaign that Molotoff, the misfit, found his place in the Army and a warm spot in the hearts of the men. Through the French Moroccan, Maknassy and Sedjenane battles he appeared at various times in French scarlet and blue capes, in an armored soldier’s “zoot suit,” in an Italian beret with a huge, black plume, and with an Italian officer’s belt.

In Port Lyautey he quickly made friends with the Arabs when others failed to make any headway. His new followers built him a tent, furnished it with rugs, tapestries, lamps, pictures, a cot and mattress, table and chairs. They dug his foxholes and brought him fruit, wine and eggs. They saw to it that this American soldier was plentifully supplied with all the comforts any man could wish for.

The outstanding feat of this “poorest example of a soldier” occurred at Station de Sened, where Molotoff’s platoon was covered by a company of Italian infantry dug in on higher ground. By this time he was regarded as the company’s best scout. Molotoff brazenly walked up the hill toward the Italian position. The enemy thought it was a surrender and withheld fire.

With his gift of gab, Molotoff made them believe they were surrounded by a superior American force. The Italians said they could not surrender until ordered to do so by a colonel who was then in the rear. Molotff went back up the hill a second time and when the Italians stood fast, he was first to charge and disarm 140 men without firing a shot.

The following day Molotoff told his platoon sergeant he was going up ahead “to see what the score is.” Standing atop a hill 800 yards from his company and waving his automatic above his head, he shouted “Finish la guerre, finish la guerre.” The sound echoed over the hills while enemy machine guns sprayed the area with searching fire. Crouched between two boulders, Molotoff made note of the gun positions, relayed the information to the artillery and soon the enemy emplacements were wiped out.

On his final exploit, he was part of a file assigned to maintain contact between his unit and a French force on the left flank. That job was too dull for a man of his caliber. He sent back word that he was going up with the French Ghoums to see “what the score was.” His final report was of a German machine-gun nest and he was last seen on his way to wipe it out with a patrol of the French Commandos. His body was discovered by the French, who found a Nazi flag—the American’s last trophy—in Molotoff’s hip pocket.

When he died a hero, there were two charges pending against this “poorest example of a man in uniform.” They were dropped from the record in accordance with Army policy. Even in death, he beat the rap.

September 21, 1944

Movies Come to Yanks in France

Pvt. Rooney Cavorts—By Courtesy of The S&S

by Charles F. Kiley, Stars and Stripes Staff Writer

CARENTAN, France, June 20 (delayed)—This town's only movie house, Le Jeanne d'Arc, which for the last four years provided entertainment for German soldiers and their girl friends, last night houses more than 1,000 paratroopers for the first film show staged in a theater for Americans in France.

Where a couple of weeks ago the Jerries were seeing Magda Schneider and Heinz Englemann in the Nazi-produced "Jeunes Filles," the Yanks, according to the owner of the theater, enjoyed themselves a helluva lot more looking and laughing at Mickey Rooney (now Pvt. Rooney) in "Andy Hardy's Blonde Trouble."

The show was staged by The Stars and Stripes, which besides gathering, publishing and circulating news in Normandy, also finds time to show a picture now and again with equipment not on its TE, but which it managed to lug across the Channel and operate until additional Special Service units get here. Shows were staged in the last week in tents and barracks, but last night marked the first time comfortable seats and a legitimate theater were available.

The movie house is owned by Marc Mouchel-Cafosse, 30-year-old English-speaking Frenchman, who enthusiastically declared it was "a pleasure, monsieurs," to open the theater for the "parachutes." The theater is equipped with American-made machinery for 35mm film, and when The Stars and Stripes turned up with 16mm. stuff M. Mouchel-Cafosse assigned three of his engineers to run the projector. A second lieutenant, on his way to the front, stopped off for a couple of hours to lend a hand.

The theater equipment, stocked in Paris before the war, was brought to Carentan about a year ago and used mainly to entertain the German garrisons in this vicinity. Civilians, the exception of the soldiers' girl friends, were barred, and all the pictures furnished by the Wehrmacht were loaded with Nazi propaganda, according to M. Mouchel-Cafosse.

There was one German-produced film in the theater when the town fell last week. It was turned over to U.S. authorities.

Last night's show was split into two performances and the only complaint from the paratroopers was that those blonde twins Pvt. (just inducted) Rooney couldn't handle were on the screen and not in the audience.

September 21, 1944

A Tired Man is Home: Pyle Can't Explain, Wounded Know

by Charles F. Kiley, Stars and Stripes Staff Writer

NEW YORK, Sept. 20—Like any man in uniform who has been in the war business for two and a half years, Ernie Pyle came home very tired. And typical of the “GIs’ war correspondent” he passed up a speedier, more comfortable Atlantic crossing by plane to make the trip with a boatload of wounded soldiers half his age.

The “skinny, dried-up little guy,” as one soldier reader characterized him in a letter, decided in Paris a few weeks ago he couldn’t go any longer without a rest. So after a few days here Ernie is going to Washington for a week, thence home to New Mexico, stopping in Indiana for a brief visit with his father.

Pyle isn’t finished with the war, though. He figures a couple of months of sunshine and home cooking will fix him up for the Pacific.

At his hotel today, Pyle didn’t look any different outwardly than he did in London last spring when he came up from Italy to get in on the landings in France or when he was working out of the First Army press camp in Normandy.

“It’s a sort of hard thing to explain to anyone here who hasn’t been through it,” Pyle said. “After the breakthrough at St. Lo in July I think I knew it was coming. Except for a slight cold I think I was all right physically. But inside I felt awful. In Paris is really got me. The Germans came over one day and pasted hell out of us. I’d been through thousands of bombings but that one did it. I knew then I’d have to get some rest.”

But Ernie wasn’t through yet. On the boat coming back the wounded who could get around asked him to go below and talk to the bedridden. Typically, Pyle went and talked with hundreds of them. They had read his farewell column in The Stars and Stripes, he said, and wanted to tell him they understood.

“There I was standing over those kids with arms, legs and eyes gone, all battered to hell and they told me they understood,” he said. “But they knew what the score was and that helped. They were amazing, always cheerful and kidding. One kid with his eyes gone would push a boy without legs in a wheelchair, the legless one guiding him. They were all together and they were going home. But a year from now they’ll be separated and a lot of them will be forgotten. There’s the great tragedy. You live with those kids for awhile and you know what the war’s about.”

Soldiers often talk about the first thing they’re going to do when they get home. Well, here’s the first thing Pyle did. There was a kid from Nebraska aboard who had lost his leg. His folks only had the notification that he was “slightly wounded,” following the War Department’s classification of wounded as “slightly” and “seriously.” He didn’t know how to tell them and thought Ernie could do it for him.

When the boat docked, that was the first thing Pyle did. “Your son is healthy, happy... don’t feel too badly about him.” Simple—gentle—typical of Pyle.

Ernie didn’t bring much back with him except his sidekick, Clark Lee, of INS, who was stricken with illness aboard, and his familiar little wool cap—which he’s discarded for the time being for a beret a la Paree—and a beat-up shovel which has been with him since Africa. He intends to take the shovel to the Pacific with him because “there’ll be some holes to dig out there, too.”