

SOMEWHERE IN EUROPE

One Strike, Two Out

During the Brest campaign, Pvt. Tinsley Landrum, an Eighth Infantry Division rifleman and a pretty fair baseball player in his Apalade, Ga., home town, caught and threw back a Jerry "potato masher" grenade with good effect. In the same attack another potato masher knocked his rifle out of his hands and destroyed the piece. Landrum picked up a German rifle from among several nearby—just in time to pick off two Nazis who were sniping at him. After the battle he examined the other German rifles. The one he had snatched was the only one of the bunch that was loaded.

* * *

Bennie Sent Me

S/Sgt. Ben Gribble, 28th Infantryman from Jermy, Pa., one of the first men to enter a Siegfried Line pillbox after the enemy fled, found several cases of hand grenades, potato-masher type, abandoned there. For the past few weeks the sergeant has been returning them to their rightful owners.

* * *

Switch to Toyland

During a shelling the First Division was taking in Germany, Pfc Alfred J. Byess, of North Charleston, S.C., took off across a field which was under fire, approached his CO, Capt. Kimball R. Richmond, of Windsor, Vt., and asked for permission to draw a battery. After the German barrage had stopped, Richmond walked across



the field over which Byess had returned to see what the urgent need for the battery had been.

In the middle of the floor of a battered French house less than 400 yards from German lines, Capt. Richmond found Byess sitting at the switch of an electric train. The engine was careening around a curve in the toy tracks surrounding the jeep driver when the captain came in.

* * *

Praise for 4th Armored

The Fourth Armored division has been commended for meeting "its assigned tasks with the greatest distinction" in a letter written to Maj. Gen. John S. Wood, division commander, by Maj. Gen. Manton E. Eddy, commanding the XII Corps.

The commendation says, in part: "Since the beginning of your historic drive through Orleans to the east, the Fourth Armored division has met its assigned tasks with the greatest distinction. The manner in which it seized successfully the towns of Sens, Troyes, Vitry-le-François and Commercy, and assisted in the capture of Montargis and Châlons-sur-Marne, was conspicuous evidence of its courage, its high state of combat efficiency and the aggressive spirit of its leaders.

"I congratulate the Fourth Armored division on its past—I wish it Godspeed and an early victory in the future."

* * *

Silver Star Story

Pvt. Helmut Hans Wilderman, of New York and the 80th Division, was captured by the Germans and, with 30 other Americans, was placed

under guard in a dry creek bed not far from the front lines.

When three German half tracks, not seeing the German guards, opened fire, killing one American and wounding another, Wilderman dashed across a field, shouting in German that the men were prisoners.

Then he talked two of the guards into escaping with him, and led them across an open field in short rushes, through heavy fire. He returned to the creek bed, wounded in head and legs. He explained to the other Americans the route of escape, then talked 150 Germans into surrendering. He led the entire group back across the lines again, still under heavy fire, to complete his self-assigned mission. Pvt. Wilderman has been awarded the Silver Star.

* * *

Stars Save Bars

Forced to crash-land his P47 on a hillside after it had been shot up by flak over enemy territory, 1/Lt. Ike Dorsey, of Opelika, Ala., scrambled for a clump of bushes, not sure which side of the line he was on. In a moment he knew. An armored car bearing a two-starred red placard drove by and Opelika jumped aboard. He was whisked to safety. Maj. Gen. Lindsay McDonald Silvester, commander of the Seventh Armored Division, was the front-touring brass.

* * *

Under Cover

In the last stages of the Brittany campaign, Eighth Infantry Division doughboys captured two high Wehrmacht officers. In the jeep taking them to a PW enclosure rode Maj. Louis S. Sohn, of Atlanta, division provost marshal. One of the captives spoke excellent English and he engaged Sohn in conversation on a variety of subjects, among them literature. And he made the surprising statement that he was particularly fond of the works of Thomas Wolfe, novelist, and George Santayana, philosopher, which are barred from Nazi libraries.

"You read their books?" Sohn asked unbelievably.

"Oh yes," was the reply. "I have read them all. I slip a cover of 'Mein Kampf' over the book when I do so."

HUBERT

by SGT. DICK WINGERT



"Pappy!"

Week of War on World's Fronts



A week of war in the ETO ended with Allied armies hacking their way deeper into Holland and Belgium. In the Pacific, the toll of Jap warships is expected to exceed 40 following the fierce clash with the U.S. Navy. Red armies drove into East Prussia towards Insterburg to threaten the great seaport of Koenigsberg. On the Finnish front, Russians crossed the Norwegian border to seize Kirkenes, chief German escape port on the Barents Sea. In Italy, Allied troops inched closer to Bologna.

The B Bag Blow It Out Here

Training

All our men have been under shell and small arms fire off and on since being in France. That's OK. This is not: Our Bn. Commander seems to think we should have close order drill and learn how to apply bandages, something we have been doing a good job of under fire for months and for

which we have been commended! Now, there seems a lull in the fighting, and we could be really resting and writing home more than ever.—Pvt. H. S.

Tank Missions

Well, here is just a few words for us tankers.

The Air Corps has a system where their men get medals and citations and such. The records of our Tank Battalion will show countless battles and deeds of heroism and so many new faces that one can always say, "Who's that???" at any chow line.

Now how about the tankers that go out in each battle and come back. Couldn't so many missions count up for them like the Air Corps?—S/Sgt. D. T. Mejo.

Right Perspective

In the S & S of October 9 I read on page one that gains were made by the U.S. forces to the extent of six miles in depth on a 20-mile front. Turning to the last page I read that our allies, the Russians, in a breakthrough in Lithuania advanced on a 175-mile front as far as 62 miles in four days.

Without lessening the credit for our own Army or our gains, don't you really believe that the Russian gains should have made page two? (Page one!—Ed.)

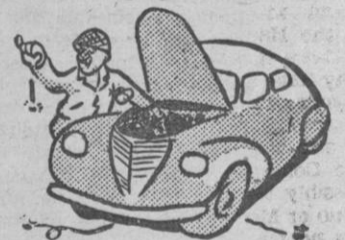
Shore Patrol!

We hope the jerks that wrote the statement in your Oct. 13 issue headed "Lowering the Boom" will read this—if they can read. Two to one these sailors are nothing but a few boots that just came over and are stationed in England. We've lived with these soldiers who have done the bitching. You boots can bet your sweet life that these guys have the right to bitch.—A. F. Sniegoski, BM2c., and three others.

Hash Marks

Once upon a time there was a first sergeant who gave blood for a blood transfusion. An hour later, the fellow who got the blood was found frozen to death. Could be, could be.

GIs of one outfit in France have added a classy ex-Nazi vehicle to their motor pool. It's a Lincoln



Zephyr reportedly used at one time by Rommel. The boys have disinfected and deloused it thoroughly.

Revised Daffynition. A "Fox" is a GI "Wolf" who can speak French.

Fun on the Home Front: Two women were chatting. Asked one, "How do you manage to get your husband to come home early



nights?" "It's easy, dearie," replied the other, "He came home unexpectedly early one evening, so I called, 'Is that you, Jack?'—and his name's Bob."

Overheard at a beachhead. "Yeah, this is a fine up-to-date camp area—complete with all the modern inconveniences."

Note to London taxi-drivers: Pedestrians should be seen and not hurt.

J. C. W.

THE STARS AND STRIPES
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Warweek

Water Barriers Can't Stop Our Troops
Interview Reveals Nazi Guerrilla Plot
More Combat Tips From Old Sergeant

Saturday, Oct. 28, 1944

Over the River -and through the Reich

Stream Crossings Among Toughest Operations We Have Faced Thus Far; Here Are Methods Which Have Worked

By Ralph Harwood

Warweek Combat Correspondent

A lot of water has gone over the dam since the Normandy days of the war, and a lot of American soldiers have gone over the water here and there to get to where they are at this sitting—strictly in Hitler's hair. Most of these soldiers had never worried too much about the layout of Europe, but they could sit down now, if they felt like it, and spiel off the names of a dozen or so rivers that run through Northern France, Belgium and the western fringes of the Reich itself.

First there was the Vire just south of the beaches, and then in quick succession, after the St. Lo breakthrough, the Mayenne, the Sarthe, the Orne, the Eure and the Seine. Farther east and north doughboys made the acquaintance of such streams as the Marne, the Aisne, the Somme and the Meuse—names they'd heard the old man mention while bragging about his part in the last war. There have been other rivers, too, and any number of ditches which probably have names that only the locals can pronounce.

There's Still the Rhine

Maybe the names aren't so important, anyway, except that a soldier lives to bull once in a while about the big deals he's been in on. What is really important is that the American soldier, by and large, knows one hell of a lot more about the combat crossing of rivers in general than he did a few months ago. It's knowledge which is standing and will continue to stand him in good stead through the closing rounds of the brawl with Hitler and company in the Nazis' own back alley.

There is still the Rhine—which may have to be crossed under conditions not resembling a Sunday afternoon ferry ride. It compares in size with maybe the Hudson or the Columbia or the Arkansas, or possibly the upper reaches of the Ohio or Mississippi. In other words, it's no mean creek, and there are a couple of other water barriers short of Berlin where the infantry and engineers may have to do their stuff all out.

The best way to cross a river, of course, is by the bridge that al-

ready spans it. That is exactly what American troops have done in a surprising number of cases in spite of the Heinie's vaunted demolition ability.

Manage to Wreck Them

One outfit did it again recently in Belgium by sending a sneak force on a roundabout route to the bridge while the main body put pressure on the retreating Germans' rearguard. The surprise group got home while the enemy was still frantically trying to get his remnants across before blowing the works.

Usually, however, the enemy manages to destroy the bridges behind him—if our air stuff hasn't already taken them out to cause him grief. He knows from his own bitter experience of the past few months that to blast a bridge is about the most effective possible delaying action. Fighting desperately in his own bailiwick, he'll miss even fewer chances to slow down the American attack than he has before.

Hesitation Is Bad

Crossing a river in boats or by a footbridge carried up in sections or by wading will always be a difficult military job. The flat, open expanse of the water gives the defense a perfect field of fire, providing it can see or hear. Then, too, water is simply not the infantryman's natural field of operation, and the thought of maybe having to do some swimming, weighted down as he is, tends to make the bravest Joe hesitate.

Veteran outfits know, however,

that any hesitation is bad, that speed is essential in successfully carrying out a crossing. They have learned how to minimize the natural disadvantages of the operation. They know, for example, that picking good launching and landing sites can make all the difference in the world, and they pay plenty of attention to their reconnaissance and preliminary planning.

Need Good Approach

As Capt. Edwin I. Shuttleworth of Philadelphia, Pa. and the 9th Division puts it:

"One of the most important things is getting the boats to the water. You've got to have a good approach to the launching site in order to get going with speed."

"Of course," says another officer who's been in on these river deals several times, "You can't forget that Jerry knows the best sites, too. You've got to keep that in mind always and not do the most obvious thing. You may move down a nice, sloping bank with an equally inviting spot all picked out on the other side, only to dis-

cover suddenly that the enemy has figured you'd jump off at that point all along. His reception committee likes to greet you just about the time you reach mid-stream. Pick the second or third best place to cross if there's a

Here's a river tip from Pvt. Lawrence F. Holland, 9th Division infantryman from Corsicana, Texas, who says:

"Where the bank is steep, have riflemen secure the crest and then get other men busy right away relaying machine-guns, mortars and ammo up the grade by the human chain method. Don't lose any time getting this stuff up where it can be put to good use if the enemy tries a fast counter-attack, as he very often does."

choice and unless your air and patrols can tell you what he's got waiting for you."

Some officers and men swear by the night-surprise type of crossing although all agree that it is extremely hard to pull off. The great-

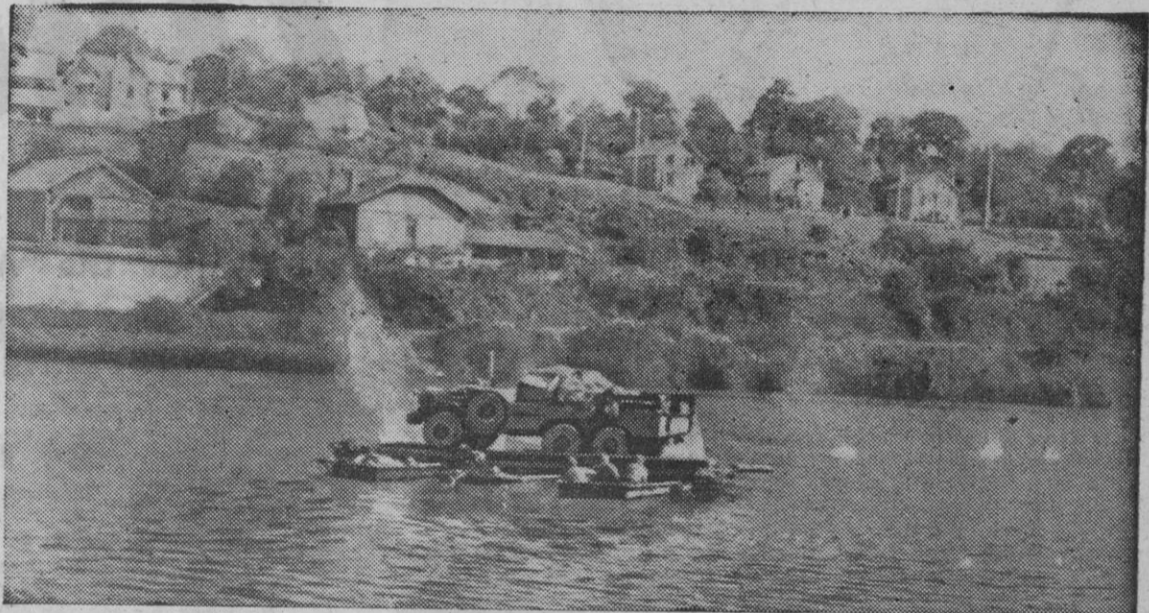
est quiet is necessary in moving up to the bank for this operation. Everything must be hand carried, including boats. Vehicles must be kept far back or, if they are to be rafted over with the first elements, they must be pushed to the bank by hand. The slightest clanking of equipment will almost always bring a flare over the whole operation. Yet it is amazing the stealth with which a good, veteran outfit can move when they want to. Surprise night crossings of rivers have been accomplished time and again by our troops on the way to Germany, and there will be others to come, just as successful.

Smoke Helps Cover

"The best time to cross a river is just before dawn," says Sgt. Vertrice Matherly, also of the 9th Division, whose home is in Noblesville, Indiana. "That's the sleepest time in any man's army. I should know."

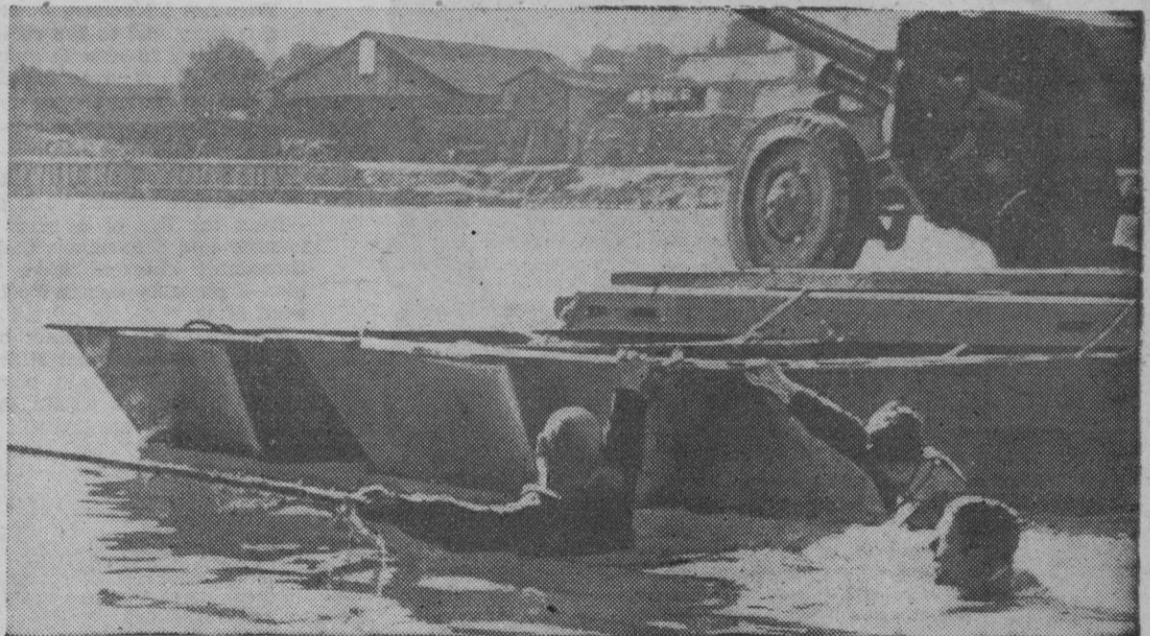
"Then too," continues the sergeant, "you have a double advantage in crossing at this hour. The

(Continued on Back Page)



U.S. Army Signal Corps Photo.

ENEMY FIRE kicks up the surface of water as army engineers manning pontoon ferry deliver a vital armored vehicle in support of infantry assault troops already across river.



U.S. Army Signal Corps Photo.

ANTI-TANK GUNS are first-priority infantry support weapon in crossing operation. Here American soldiers shepherd one of the hard-hitting 57 mm. pieces to far shore on pontoon raft.



OWI Staff Photo.

M-4 TANK and fresh troops move to the attack over span thrown across ruins of bridge dynamited by retreating Germans.

GI JERRY

by Lt. Dave Breger

Nazi Guide-Book Part XVIII



Lt. Dave Breger



YOU AND YOUR BRIGHT IDEAS ABOUT GIVING THEM INFERIORITY COMPLEXES!

"I can tell you this. The German soldier at the front has the feeling of towering superiority over the Russian. To compare him would be an insult."

ADOLF HITLER, JAN. 30, 1942



YOUR EXCELLENCE, THEY FEEL THE SAME WAY - ABOUT THE WAR STARTING THE RIGHT TIME FOR THEM, TOO!

"Spring is coming. I feel so well, so fresh. I thank Providence that as this war was inevitable it started in my lifetime while I am still young and fresh."

ADOLF HITLER, FEB. 24, 1944

WONDERFUL, MY GENERALS! SUCH GLORIOUS DESTRUCTION! AND SO RICHLY DESERVED!



WELL, SOMEBODY'S GOT TO TELL HIM ENGLAND'S THE OTHER DIRECTION - THAT IT'S GERMANY HE'S LOOKING AT!

"I see Britain declining under the heavy blows of our armed forces, struggling painfully for existence and begging all the world for help to prolong her life for a couple of months."

ADOLF HITLER, MAY 5, 1941



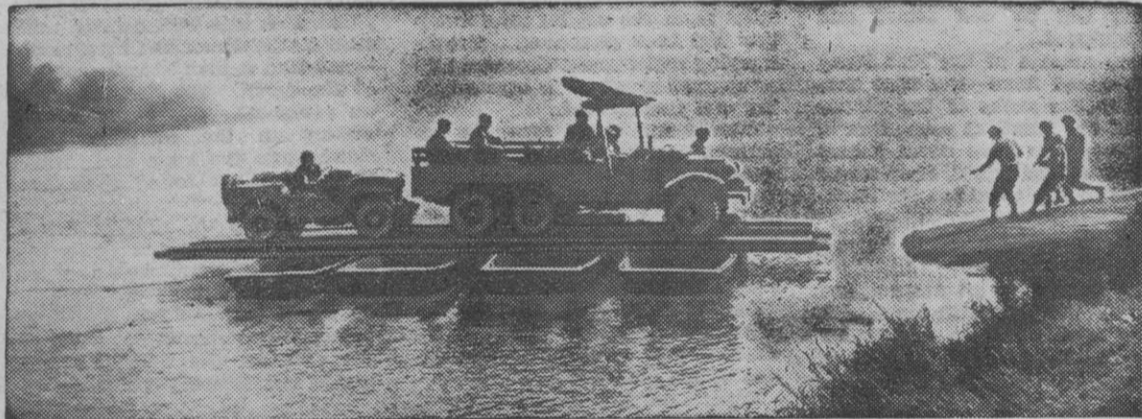
CULTURAL: We are the Master Race. SOCIAL: We are the Master Race. ECONOMIC: We own the world.

SORRY - YOU'RE ON YOUR OWN NOW! KINDLY FORWARD MY MAIL TO JAPAN

"It is a great pity that burglars and brigands steal from a man like me the precious time I intended to devote to the cultural, social and economic betterment of my people"

ADOLF HITLER, JAN. 1, 1942

How Yanks Cross River Barriers



AP Photo.

SMOKE SCREEN, against which vehicles being ferried across river are silhouetted, effectively hinders German shelling of crossing site. Here men ashore haul raft in close for fast unloading at good landing place.

(Continued from Front Page)

remaining darkness covers the first part of the operation, and the coming daylight a little later shows you where you're going on the other side. That's the greatest problem so far as crossing under cover of darkness is concerned—the difficulty of regrouping and getting oriented in relation to objectives."

Where there is no possibility by reason of the terrain or situation to make a surprise crossing in the darkness, smoke is usually used, wind permitting, to screen the jump-off and blanket the enemy's observation.

Enemy Gets Confused

Usually, a smoke crossing is accompanied by several feints at points along the bank other than where the wet run actually is made. The object of this, of course, is to screw up the enemy and keep him spread out as long as possible. He's got to be ready wherever you're laying your smoke, at least until he is absolutely sure which point is the hot one.

The enemy's temporary uncertainty is what makes it sure that if the crossing can be carried out swiftly it's all to the good and will pay dividends when you get ashore and go to work securing a solid bridgehead. The importance of speed in a river crossing operation

cannot be over-emphasized, according to the men who have made them.

There are a lot of little matters that contribute to the speed and minimize the danger of a crossing. For one thing, a man should be somewhat familiar with the tricks of rowing a boat. And playing the current of the stream is important in avoiding a tiresome, timetaking struggle to come out at the right point on the other side. Even in launching a boat there's a right way and a wrong one. Wesley Emwright, of San Diego, Cal., a platoon sergeant in the 9th Division, relates:

"We had to push our boat over a high bank into the water. You've got to push them out fast under those conditions, or the bow will go under."

Wait Till Boat Grounds

"Another angle to bear in mind," the sergeant went on, "is that, unlike in an amphibious assault from the sea, you do not bail out until the boat grounds. Few rivers have the shelf-like floor of the ocean close inshore. On the contrary, there may be deep water right up to the bank, and a man is not much good for the business at hand if he has lost his gear in the soup. Besides that, it's far healthier to get in away from the water and the exposed bank as quickly as possible."

Still another type of river cross-

ing is where the assault infantry goes under an all out artillery barrage. Such a crossing was made by elements of the 30th Division. These troops hand carried sections of footbridge with them to throw across a narrow stream. They were confronted with a steep and slippery far bank, beyond which were pillboxes, a fortified woods and an old castle from which the Germans directed heavy small arms and machine-gun fire upon them.

Means to An End

The difficult assignment was carried out, however, in a minimum of time. The five pillboxes emplaced to command the river at this point were quickly reduced, as was the castle stronghold later, along with the woods into which the supporting artillery poured 1300 rounds of HE in one ten-minute phase of the attack. Division engineers had a vehicle bridge in before the night was out.

The military job really starts when the troops land on the far shore after any river crossing. The crossing itself, like a parachute jump or a forced march, is merely a means to an end—to get at the enemy. In this regard, troops once ashore must drive hard and fast for their predetermined assembly point, or lose no time in cleaning out small arms fire and knocking off enemy OPs. Hesitating to

assemble or reorganize near the bank is bad. Fast dispersal ashore is essential if losses are to be held down.

That does not mean that the assembly point or primary objective should be far in. In fact, if it is very far in, trouble is invited. Pvt. Virgil Raper, of McMinnville, Tenn., who has operated with forward elements of a 9th Division crossing party, says:

"If you drive too far in at first, the Germans like to follow you up and surprise you. You've got to keep your exit open, building your defense up and down the road. You can't do this if the distance is great."

T/Sgt. Karl Klopfer, 9th Division machine gun platoon sergeant, says:

"It's best to bite off just enough ground to get the bridge across at first. You've got to have tanks

to fight the Krauts on their home lot."

A thorough map study by everybody down to the last Joe taking part in the operation is the only commonsense preliminary to a river crossing. That way men do not need to bunch up to keep from getting lost. If they know the layout fairly well they can usually get to where they are supposed to go in small groups faster than in large ones.

It's vitally important that the enemy OPs be taken out quickly because artillery and vehicles cannot ordinarily be rafted across in support of the assault elements as long as enemy guns are throwing observed fire into the river. The rafts are too much like sitting ducks. And the engineers' job of getting the support bridge in for the passage of armor is out of the question if some German is calling his shots from a nearby hilltop.

THE OLD SERGEANT'S CORNER



The Old Sergeant's front line agents have come up with a hatfull of new items on the latest tricks of the enemy. Here are some of them, presented because they may help other outfits which have not yet been committed.

One of the latest tricks of the Germans is placing booby traps under American mines in areas where they have made successful local counter-attacks, and then fallen back again. In other words, don't try picking up our own mines in re-won territory without giving them a very careful going-over.

Veteran infantrymen, now operating inside Germany, are noting a new characteristic of German automatic-weapons fire:

These guns "climb" when they are fired, so if the first few shots don't hit a man, the rest are almost sure to go over his head.

More and more the Germans are using flares at night as "bait" to draw fire in the hope that our men will give away their positions. The moral is "don't let flares tempt you to fire—that's why they send them up."

Some bazooka men are now

operating in two-gun teams which enables them to get off the second shot much faster than if they had to re-load. When they have a target, they are ready with a one-two punch. When two bazooka shells slam into German armor the inventors of this two-gun method say, "the crew can't figure out what hit them. Lots of times they jump out. It's easy to knock off the tracks that way, too."

Men who have faced—and defeated them—say the enemy's flame-throwing half-tracks are not as dangerous as they are terrifying. Here's their advice to new troops:

"Don't be afraid of half-tracks with flame throwers. If the ground or grass is damp they won't hurt you. Remember, the guy behind it can't observe his fire, there's too much smoke."

"You can work up around the side of it, or behind it, and knock out the vehicle itself with grenades—it's only a half-track."