

"...By rushing out from his fixed defenses the enemy may give us the chance to turn his great gamble into his worst defeat."
Eisenhower's Order of the Day.

THE STARS AND STRIPES

Daily Newspaper of U.S. Armed Forces

in the European Theater of Operations

"Let everyone hold before him a single thought—to destroy the enemy on the ground, in the air, everywhere—destroy him!"
EISENHOWER.

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Sunday, Dec. 24, 1944

3d Army Hits Flank, Nazis Say; Air Fleets Hammer Attackers

Foe Loses 178 Planes Over Front

U.S. and British planes roared out in mighty waves of destruction yesterday, mercilessly bombing and strafing Von Rundstedt's counter-attacking Wehrmacht, and beating off record forces of the Luftwaffe in a series of fierce aerial dogfights.

The weather over the area of the German striking force was clear for the first time since Monday, and Allied air commanders hurled all of their available tactical forces against the roads choked with men and material of the advancing German columns. Front line dispatches declared that "terrible damage" had been wreaked by the savage attacks of the U.S. and British fliers.

Nazi Planes Shot Down

Incomplete reports last night indicated that 178 of more than 600 German planes sent out as a covering force for the counter-offensive had been shot down, but this figure was expected to rise sharply. Previous record day for Luftwaffe tactical operations was Sunday, when 450 fighters were thrown into action against U.S. forces.

More than 3,000 Allied planes rose up to meet the Luftwaffe and

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MacArthur 'Aide' Hoaxes New York

NEW YORK, Dec. 23 (ANS).—New York hotel owners, nightclub managers, theater people and newspapermen were still in a whirl today after a man who said he was an army captain and spokesman for Gen. MacArthur made reservations last night, supposedly for the general, at several spots in town. First "Capt. Dennenberg" called the Astor Hotel where he asked for a "suite of six rooms for Gen. MacArthur."

Later the same voice reserved a table for six at the Copacabana and six tickets for a sold-out show. "Dennenberg" then called practically every newspaper in town asking them to respect the fact that Gen. MacArthur was incognito.

This started a flurry of calls to astounded army public relations offices. The whole thing lasted until the army tried to reach the "captain" at the telephone number he left for future reference. It turned out to be a grocery store.

More Home News Due

WASHINGTON, Dec. 23 (ANS).—U.S. civilian newspapers publishing editions for servicemen abroad will be granted extra newsprint from a special Army and Navy allotment, the WPB announced.

Nazi Lands on Mine Placed by Germans

SOMEWHERE IN GERMANY, Dec. 23.—American infantrymen near Mariadorf heard agonizing screams coming from a nearby field early this morning. They found a Nazi paratrooper with his leg blown off.

The paratrooper had landed adjacent to a slag pile and then started creeping across a field—which proved to be a minefield laid by the Germans and marked weeks ago.

The 'chutist had stepped on one of his own mines. The field was the same one where 30 Yanks were killed or injured during the recent offensive.

B29s Beat Off 150 Fighters to Batter Nagoya

NEW YORK, Dec. 23 (ANS).—The heaviest Superfort Armada yet to bomb the Jap mainland blasted aircraft factories in Nagoya for two-and-one-half hours yesterday, fought off desperate fighter resistance and returned without loss to their 1,400-mile away Saipan base.

The War Department announced that more than 150 fighters manned by "first class" Jap pilots engaged more than 100 B29s in frantic but vain attempts to drive off the 21st AF bombers from the Mitsubishi aircraft factory targets. Bombs again rocked the plant already blasted three times in the last ten days.

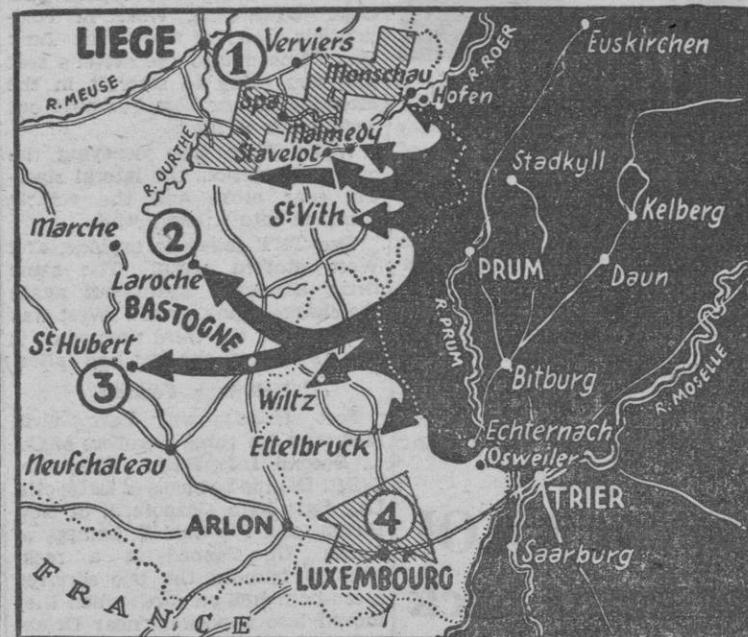
The number of Jap planes destroyed was not disclosed officially although the Japs admitted the loss of 15.

In the Philippines, American infantrymen were chasing isolated Jap columns toward Polompon, an unoccupied port on the northwestern tip of Leyte but a possible enemy escape route. Jap dead were being counted at the rate of 1,800 per day, Gen. MacArthur announced.

On recently invaded Mindoro

(Continued on Page 8)

Where German Troops Are Wedged



Stars and Stripes Map by Baird
One main objective of the Nazi drive is Liege (1). Enemy columns have reached Laroche (2) and St. Hubert (3). Germans report the Third Army attacked the objective's south flank (4).

Question of Nazi Reserves Discussed by Military Experts

WASHINGTON, Dec. 23 (ANS).—Germany is withholding her ultimate total strength from the breakthrough battle of Western Europe until the Nazi High Command can determine the prospects for a truly major victory, military experts here reported today.

It is probable that the German idea of such a victory would be the trapping and destruction of two or three Allied Armies cut off from the rest of their forces in France, the AP quoted the experts.

The Nazi offensive, despite its initial swift progress, has not reached the point where the German High Command can make such a determination, the AP commented.

One military expert said that, in view of the early success of the breakthrough, the enemy should have progressed farther than he is known to have advanced since

(Continued on Page 8)

Generals Will Wear 5 Stars in Cluster

WASHINGTON, Dec. 23 (ANS).—The insignia of the new generals of the Army was announced by the WD today. It consists of five silver five-pointed stars fastened together in a circle with the inner points touching. This "Ring of Stars" will be the same color and about the same size as a lieutenant-colonel's silver leaf, and at a distance the two might be confused.

Gen. John J. Pershing, who as "General of the Armies" is still the country's highest-ranking officer, will continue to wear four stars.

Cooks, MPs Save Luxembourg City

WITH U.S. FORCES, Western Front, Dec. 23 (UP).—With cooks, company clerks and MPs fighting side by side, a thin line of doughboys from a battered regiment staved off the attack of an entire German division Dec. 16, it can now be revealed. The action saved the city of Luxembourg from being encircled.

The battle took place in the vicinity of Echternach where GIs fought off waves of German infantry for 48 hours.

"The Germans attacked at dawn after an all-night artillery barrage," the regimental CO said. "We knew they were

coming but didn't know where, when or how many," he added.

"My regiment was spread over ten miles when the division hit us. At the end of the first day they had penetrated our lines nearly a mile. That night they infiltrated our artillery positions.

"I contacted a nearby division for reserves. They sent 60 MPs. We fought like tigers because we were the only troops between the Germans and the city of Luxembourg.

"The men's morale was amazing. They really stacked up a lot of dead Germans," the CO said.

Stavelot, St. Vith Fall To Enemy

Allied air might struck at Germany's counter-offensive yesterday as the fog which had virtually blacked out air power for seven days lifted to reveal Panzer columns—22 miles from the Franco-Belgian border by Thursday noon crawling across the snowclad hills of Belgium in frosty sunlight.

As Field Marshal von Rundstedt's wedge drove deeper toward the Ardennes Forest, the Nazis in carefully-worded announcements claimed that two Allied forces had attacked the flanks of the 40-mile bulge from the north and south.

The German news agency military commentator, Capt. Ludwig Sertorius, said that British reinforcements from Field Marshal Montgomery's forces had been thrown against the northern flank of Von Rundstedt's salient.

Patton Attack Reported

Other Nazi news agency reports said Lt. Gen. George S. Patton's U.S. Third Army had assaulted the German bulge from the south. These German sources claimed Patton had abandoned his Saar River bridgeheads at Dillingen and Saarlautern.

The German wedge broadened in Eastern Belgium as the desperate American defense of St. Vith crumbled and Nazis took the town. Another enemy thrust seized Stavelot to the north. Americans had held Von Rundstedt's forces off for days

(Continued on Page 8)

Nazis Admit Breach In Budapest Lines

The Germans reported yesterday that Soviet troops with strong armored support have launched an extensive attack on Budapest from all sides and admitted a breach had been made in their lines southeast of the Hungarian capital.

Moscow was silent on the progress of the Hungarian campaign and also on earlier German reports of a new Red offensive on the Baltic front toward the port of Libau.

The only Soviet announcement reported the destruction of 101 German tanks during the past 24 hours. The announcement did not specify where the action took place, but presumably the total included the panzers destroyed along the whole of the eastern front.

The Star and Stripes will be published as usual tomorrow, Christmas Day.

Maginot Forts Found Built of Poor Material

By Ed Clark

WITH SEVENTH ARMY IN THE FRANCO-GERMAN BORDERLAND, Dec. 23.—In 1940, when the Germans ran over France after breaking through the Maginot Line, hotshot military writers wrote of the fatal French mistake of failing to extend the border defenses from Sedan to the Channel along the Belgian frontier.

That was the biggest pile of bunk and addleheaded hot air ever foisted on the reading and radio public. No one knows that better today than Seventh Army troops, practical not theoretical military men, who have now entered the Bitchelz sector en route to the German frontier.

In many instances, these doughfeet are really hanging their washing on the Maginot, not the Siegfried Line, because most of these French fortifications are of little good for anything else. The American soldiers have found that Hitler didn't have to look for a weak spot in the Maginot—all he had to do was pick where he wanted to go and when.

Nazis Shun Forts

Even the Germans, falling back toward their own borders, don't put any faith in the Maginot, even as a makeshift defense. Sometimes they'll put a few men in a pillbox, but generally they'll dig in around one of the Maginot defenses and ignore the prepared positions entirely. And it's not because the fortifications all face the wrong way.

The main reason for the almost mutual American and German distrust in the Line is the fact that these vaunted defenses, are literally not worth the powder to blow them up. Instead of being made of steel and concrete, as advertised, they're world's fair phoneyes of the first water.

The steel reinforcing used in much of the Maginot in this sector is of poorer quality than that required by law in the U.S. for apartment and public buildings. And as for the concrete, a couple of picks with a bayonet will peel off the stucco facing and expose a sorry mixture of rocks and pebbles. Mixed with a little cement to hold them together, those stacked-up gravelyards passed for concrete.

As a monument to graft, the Maginot fortifications are magnificent. As military installations, they might also have served as monuments to the dead caught within them.

Baseball-Tossing GI Fools Nazis With Stuff

The Nazis who were watching from across the blast-shattered bridge must have figured 2/Lt. Robert B. Lindley, of Lynwood, Calif., was either off his nut or just playful when he tossed a baseball with a string tied to it across the stream and almost into their hands.

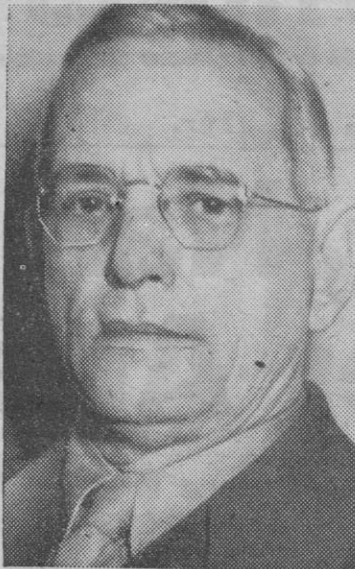
Lindley pulled on the string until the ball rolled off the far abutment. Then he tugged it back to his side of the river and left the spot with the Germans still gawking.

What the Nazis didn't know was that the CO of the Third Div.'s Tenth Combat Engineers wanted to measure the blown bridge's length, and the knot Lt. Lindley tied in the string when the ball rolled off the abutment gave the information.

Varied Career

The 749th Tank Bn. has been in action for 155 successive days and has served in four campaigns with three armies and four different divisions.

New ASC Chief



Brig. Gen. Clarence P. Kane

USSTAF announced yesterday that Brig. Gen. Clarence P. Kane, of San Diego, Calif., has been named the new chief of the Air Service Command. He will succeed Maj. Gen. Hugh J. Knerr, who continues in his post as deputy commander of USSTAF.

Gen. Kane, who has been in the Air Forces continuously since 1917, has been deputy commanding general of the Air Service Command since last May. His new post puts him in charge of all supplies, service and repairs for U.S. combat aircraft in Europe.

Million AWOL Jerricans Back

As the campaign to recover the estimated 3,500,000 jerricans which have gone AWOL in Europe continued in high gear, the Office of the Chief Quartermaster revealed yesterday that approximately 1,000,000 jerricans have been recovered during the last 30 days.

Most of this number were turned in by rear-echelon units patrolling highways and hedgerows behind the lines. By this means 719,799 cans were recovered.

It was noted that 92,509 cans had been returned for general use by organizations possessing a supply in excess of regular allowances. Repair of damaged cans put another 29,878 back into circulation.

Thousands of jerricans are also being obtained as a result of a campaign just begun to enlist the French public in the drive.

"The shortage of jerricans is still acute," warned the Chief Theater Quartermaster, "and there must be no letdown in the campaign. With the supply lines as long as they are now, each can is precious—too precious to be used as a seat, a sidewalk through the mud, or to carry more than the authorized reserve of gasoline in the back of a truck."

GIs Hop Truck for Movie But Land at Other 'Show'

WITH SEVENTH ARMORED DIV., HOLLAND, Dec. 23.—A group of "Lucky Seventh" infantrymen, just out of the line, was patiently waiting for the truck that was to take them to a rear-area movie. A six-by-six came rumbling down the road.

"Hey, buddy," yelled one of the men, "headed for the show?" "Yup," said the driver. "Hop in." The truck rolled on—and on some more, as the GIs exchanged speculative but not too inquisitive comments.

After the big vehicle had halted

Fall of Driant Saved Bastion From TNT Fate

WITH FIFTH INF. DIV., GERMANY, Dec. 23.—When Fort Driant, most publicized of the Metz forts, capitulated Dec. 8, "Red Diamond" division men took time out to relax and, while getting their breath before their next mission, they told of their experiences during the siege.

One story is that about Capt. Lewis W. Fogg, an engineer from Youngstown, Ohio, who ordered five tons of captured German explosives packed into a captured German 155mm self-propelled gun. Capt. Edward A. West, of Haddonfield, N.J., of the 735th Tank Bn., climbed into the driver's seat and was going to steer it in the direction of the fort, jumping out just before it hit.

While West was jockeying the gun into position, the lateral steering gear broke and the vehicle smashed into a stone wall.

The TNT failed to explode, and West started again. The same thing happened again but again the charge didn't go off. West was about to try the third time when it was announced the fort had fallen.

Hell in a Foxhole

Fort Driant will have vivid memories for three members of Co. L, Second Inf. Regt. They are S/Sgt. Dannis Latiolois of Lafayette, La.; Sgt. John Gasparetti, of New Haven, and Pfc Carl F. Lampp, of Carmi, Ill. Penned in a rock-rimmed foxhole, the trio survived a ten-hour hell on earth when they moved into a position near Driant late one night to relieve men from another division.

When morning came, Gasparetti peeped out to see a German pillbox 25 yards away. While the three hugged the bottom of the hole, rifle grenades, bazooka rockets and 88 fire peppered the area.

A German shell finally scored a hit, caving in the rim of the hole, but at the same time throwing up a cloud of smoke and dust, covering the doughboys sufficiently to allow them to make a break. All got away.

Artillery Crew Hears Shell-by-Shell Account

Thanks to S/Sgt. William Sparks, of Shelbyville, Ind., artillerymen of the 30th Infantry Division had a chance to hear the results of their work. Sparks and his squad, leading an attack on the Siegfried Line, were cut off and surrounded. He called for an artillery barrage which came down so close to his unit that he could hear the cries of stricken Germans. Holding the phone up, Sparks gave the artillerymen a chance to hear both their shells and the results.

Why The Going Is Tough This Winter



A jeep, foraging through muddy water hub high, leads an American convoy past wrecked buildings somewhere on the First Army front.

General Cools Heels as PW As 'Captors' Debate Claims

By Ed Wilcox

Stars and Stripes Staff Writer

WITH THIRD ARMY, Dec. 23.—The Yank infantrymen went after Nazi Gen. Heinrich Keitel like a bunch of bobby sockers clutching at Frankie Sinatra, and now nobody can figure out who captured the old guy first and Keitel is yelling for a recount. The capture took place Nov. 19, but the claims for the Joe are still flying.

T/Sgt. Harold J. Harter, of Chicago, a platoon sergeant in the 377th Reg., 95th Div., says that it all happened because he had a stomachache.

"I was going down the street to try and locate the medics," Harter explained, "when one of the guys in my outfit comes running up to me and tells me that he'd appreciate it if I'd come and give him a hand in capturing a German general."

"So off we go to a hospital in Metz and we get there just as a bunch of Jerries are trying to load Keitel onto a stretcher. When they saw us, they dropped him and ran like hell."

Grabbed a Captain

"So I walked over to him and told him that I was taking him prisoner. The other guy, meanwhile, went out to get more guys. And before he got back I grabbed a Nazi captain who came back to get the general."

A T/3 of the 5th Div., Aaron

L. Campbell, of Kenny, Ill., says that he was the first to capture the commander of the Metz garrison.

"I don't know about all of these other guys who say they captured that duck—but I think I captured him before any of the others," Campbell said.

"I was nosin' around in a tunnel beside the hospital," the sergeant said, "and I see two Jerries comin' down the hall with this bird on the stretcher—wounded."

Grabbed His Luger

"As they pass me I told them to stop and I saw that this fellow is important people. So I reached down and grabbed his luger. He was madder than a wet hen and was yelling that he wouldn't surrender to anyone of less rank. I told him that was TS."

"Just then," the sergeant said, "a colonel from another division comes walking in and he fast-talked me into trading him the general's luger for a P38. I was a jerk to do that. So then the colonel said Keitel was his catch."

At the end of the Metz operation the 90th Div. was officially credited with Gen. Keitel's capture. The 95th campaigned for their man Harter; Sgt. Campbell looked sadly at the P38. The 90th maintained a smug silence, saying nothing. And General Keitel, cooling his heels in a PW cage, mumbled to himself about "indignities."

Captured Sherman Runs A Gantlet of Rockets

Pvt. Larry Sabalofsky, T. & E. Bronx and the 8th Infantry Division, has something of a reputation as a tank destroyer.

In a recent skirmish, when everybody was holed up while a Jerry tank ran helter-skelter around the area, Sabalofsky suddenly rose up out of his foxhole and placed three tank-smashing rockets from his bazooka into the troublesome enemy tank. When the smoke cleared, the tank was still cavorting, and there didn't even seem to be a dent in it. Sabalofsky felt badly about it—until he learned, somewhat later, that the tank was a captured Sherman.

Sharpshooters in 90th Receive Praise of PWs

WITH 90th INF. DIV.—Nazi prisoners say that 90th Div. riflemen are crack shots, and the Germans refer to the outfit as the "Elite Division." So many Wehrmacht soldiers were shot through the head, the PWs reported, that the Nazis thought they were opposed by companies of specially-picked sharpshooters.

Delivers Baby

Capt. Felix S. Vecchione, MC, of Boston, assisted in the delivery of a baby to a French mother working with a flashlight, penknife and a piece of string. Mother and child are doing well.

HASH MARKS

The innocent home front. Lt. William J. (Cully) Cullerton, a hot ETO fighter pilot, received a letter from his Chicago girl friend asking, "Haven't you seen any Zeros yet?"

And here's a bit of GI philosophy that hits the nail on the head:
A line I'll gladly sweat out
Is when I'm finally let out.

Seen on a section 8 test paper. "A submarine is a ship with water on all four sides."

"Know what I'd like for Christmas?" said S/Sgt. Louis Bodine, of Shadlar, Okla., to Pfc Frank Svoboda, of Chicago, as they dug a



two-man foxhole. "A bottle of Scotch."

Svoboda's shovel struck a box. The 102nd Div. men unearthed it carefully, wary of booby traps.

The box contained two bottles of Scotch

Conversation at the front:
"Are you on speaking terms with your first sergeant?"
"Well, I listen."

Shed a tear in your beer for Sgt. Kenneth Smith who sweats life out at an air base. He moans: My GI bike has torn me apart. But naught have I the purple heart.

This little verse left in our typewriter just about sums up the thoughts of a lot of us these days.
He follows me where'er I go
A certain loathsome GI Joe
With oily palms and whisper low,
"Hey, Mac, ya gotta cigarette?"

Who said that? Juvenile delinquency is when children act like their parents.

J. C. W.

AEF-RADIO-AFN Program

- Time TODAY
- 1330—Sammy Kaye.
 - 1815—Andre Kostelanetz.
 - 1901—Jack Benny.
 - 2105—Command Performance.
- TOMORROW
- 0815—Dinah Shore.
 - 1001—Christmas Stocking.
 - 2015—Fred Waring.
 - 2207—Command Performance.

Help Wanted —AND GIVEN

Write your question or problem to Help Wanted. The Stars and Stripes, Paris, France, APO 887.

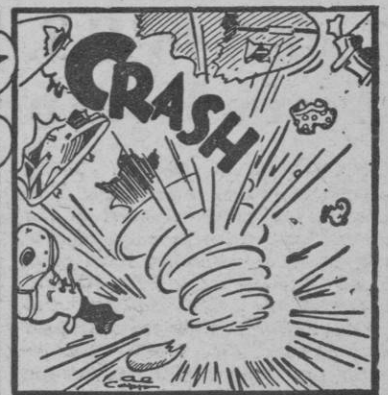
RAYMOND Bresinski, Brooklyn, S/Sgt. Edward Cavanaugh, Fresno, Calif.; Sgt. Lial Collins, Huntsville, Tex.; Jack and Abbott Daniel, Tullahoma, Tenn.; Sgt. Hyman Darer; Ric Dominicus, New Brunswick, N.J.; James Dorso, Hoboken, N.J.; Ray Ellis, York, Neb.; T/4 Ray Frank, Cincinnati; T/5 Billy Holland, Paris, Tenn.; Cpl. Richard J. Harrison, Atlantic City.

Sgt. Martin Howard, Long Beach, N.Y.; Pfc Elon A. Holmes, Houston; Sgt. William E. Hastman, Douglas, Wyo.; Charles Jenkins, Hopewell, Va.; Sgt. John Lake, Cicero, Ill.; Pvt. David Leiser, St. Louis; Joe Loyed, Alton, Ill.; Sgt. Lillian McHadden, A-604375; T/Sgt. John Mangin, Kingston, Pa.; Frank E. Nagy, New Brunswick, N.J.; William C. O'Neill, Washington County, O.; Robert L. Peyton, Dehart, Ky.; Michial O. Perusic.

Pvt. Sam Peltz; T/5 Arthur Rehling, Cincinnati; Leonard Riccio, Olyphant, Pa.; Ollie Robinson, Temple, Tex.; John L. Satterwhite, Fries, Va.; Stevens, Stratford, Conn.; Chuck Spender, Salem, O.; Joe Sledzinski, Detroit; Pfc Sam Uboldi, Beaver Falls, Pa.; Pfc Perry S. Wolff, Chicago.

Li'l Abner

By Courtesy of United Features.



Terry And The Pirates

By Courtesy of News Syndicate.

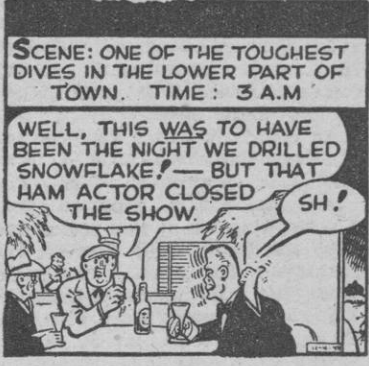
By Milton Caniff



Dick Tracy

By Courtesy of Chicago Tribune Syndicate Inc.

By Chester Gould



Abbie an' Slat

By Courtesy of United Features.

By Raeburn Van Buren



Popeye

By Courtesy of King Features Syndicate

By B. Zaboly



Blondie

By Courtesy of King Features Syndicate

By Chic Young



Army Returns 70,000 to U.S. Every Month

WASHINGTON, Dec. 23 (ANS).—Between 70,000 and 80,000 U.S. soldiers are being returned to the States from overseas each month, and more than 750,000 have come home on leave since Pearl Harbor, Secretary of War Stimson disclosed today in a letter to Senator Guy Cordon, (R., Ore.) The senator had transmitted an Oregon petition for the return of the 41st Div., which has been fighting in the South Pacific for more than two years.

Describing the current rotation rate as "no mean achievement," Stimson said it could not be stepped up, at least until Germany's defeat, without relegating the prosecution of the war to a secondary role.

Stimson told Cordon he could understand the anxiety among parents and friends of members of the 41st, but added: "It is an unfortunate but unavoidable fact that we simply lack a sufficient number of qualified replacements and adequate shipping facilities to establish a program of rotation which will permit short periods of overseas service for all soldiers."

"It is bald if unpleasant fact that the Army can do no more than it is now doing to return these men, at least until the defeat of Germany, unless the prosecution of the war is to become a matter of secondary concern."

German Reserves Wait, Experts Say

(Continued from Page 1)

Saturday. There is, however, no inclination to deny the fact that the situation continues to be grave and that the enemy has by no means committed his utmost strength to the offensive.

Military students here say that German reinforcements exist.

The Russians, however, have assured their western allies that a winter offensive is coming. This assurance, it was learned, was not the result of any new and direct plea made because of the menace of the German breakthrough. It was given by Moscow some time before the Nazis smashed out on their offensive.

Stars and Stripes U.S. Bureau

NEW YORK, Dec. 23.—Broadcaster William Shirer, just returned from a six-week tour of the Western Front, told a press conference yesterday that First Army commanders were aware three weeks ago of the possibility of a German attack and guessed correctly where it might come. But, he added, later events strongly indicated that G2 had failed to apprise them of its strength.

"The surprise in this offensive," Shirer said, "was that the Germans could and would muster 15 divisions of reserves to strike in territory where paved roads are few and where, once off the roads, vehicles are lost in mud up to their axles."

John A. Michie, a reporter for the Chicago Sun and the New York newspaper PM, quoted Washington military analysts, whom he did not name, as expressing the belief that Allied commanders did not know enough about the German plans to prepare adequate defenses. "What they mean," Michie added, "is that our military intelligence service failed in its job of reporting accurately the movements of the enemy."

George Fielding Elliot, syndicated writer, said that the Allied command was not surprised by the attack "against the tightly-held sector between Monschau and Trier," but that it was surprised by "the strength of the blow."

Fake BBC Programs Broadcast by Nazis

In addition to using Allied military markings for vehicles and clothing, the Germans have set up fake BBC radio programs, it was disclosed at SHAEF according to Reuters.

The bogus BBC broadcasts purport to give authoritative news bulletins in English, apparently with the hope of confusing American troops fighting in groups isolated behind the German lines but still within radio communication.

Allied Planes Hit Attackers

(Continued from Page 1)

to hammer at enemy armor, troop concentrations, supply columns and communication and rear installations.

Fighter-bombers of the Ninth AF flew more than 1,000 sorties during the day. In battles before noon, planes of the 19th TAC knocked down 18 German fighters out of 50 at a cost two U.S. fighter-bombers, and destroyed 12 tanks and 30 trucks in an armored column.

Day's total for Ninth AF's fighter-bombers was 73 Nazi planes destroyed, according to preliminary figures.

At the same time, more than 400 heavy bombers of the Eighth AF struck their first powerful blow at Rundstedt's week-old offensive. They blasted road and rail junctions in Germany just beyond the Belgian border.

Pound Supply Routes

The Forts and Liberators were escorted by approximately 700 Thunderbolts and Lightnings as they pounded the arteries through which the Nazi drives are being supplied. More than 250 German fighters swarmed up to attack the Eighth, but were beaten off with a loss of 77 planes.

The Eighth's attack was followed later in the day by an assault by fighter-escorted Lancasters of the RAF, who hit at the German garrison and at railyards in Trier, and smashed at other targets in the Rhineland.

Medium bombers of the Ninth AF had their biggest battle with the Luftwaffe yesterday. Marauders, Havocs and Invaders, flying 650 sorties to bomb a series of bridges and railheads behind the attack zone, were jumped by more than 100 Nazi fighters.

Incomplete reports said that the Ninth bombers shot down 21 planes, with seven more probably destroyed and 22 damaged.

8th Army Gains in Italy

ROME, Dec. 23.—Further slow progress by the Eighth Army north of Faenza was reported by Allied Headquarters yesterday. On the Fifth Army front, American troops improved their positions in the Monte Belmonte area below Bologna.

Casual GIs Earned This Meal

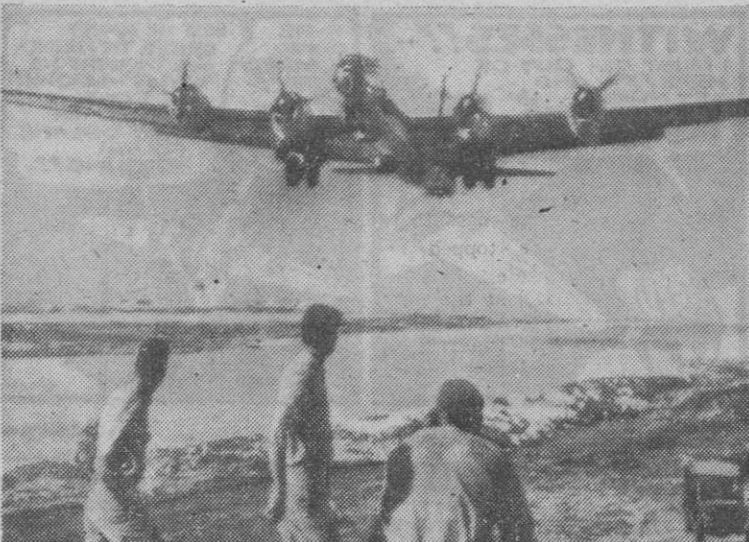
THIS is Pfc Mike L. Volpe's story of how his squad in L Co., 320th Inf. of the 35th Inf. Div. took time out from dinner to capture another German town.

"Our squad took a town and five of us put four chickens on the stove to cook. We had potatoes and peas, too. We had a good meal cooking and the order came down for our platoon to send some men to take another town."

"So we took the chickens and the pot and took off across the field. Our sergeant told us if we ran into any Jerries we would have enough of a fire to cook them."

"We crossed water up to our waist but we still carried the chickens. Luck was with us. We took the town without any trouble and then finished cooking our chickens. What a meal it was. Worth taking the chickens!"

Off to Bomb Japan—1,400 Mi. Away



Ground crews head for their jeep and the barracks to sweat out a B29 raid on Japan, as a Superfort rises from the runway at its Saipan airfield.

Patton Strikes South Flank, British Hit North, Nazis Say

(Continued from page 1)

in this sector, splitting the German drive practically in the center.

Germans launched a new assault to break the American grip in the northern part of the offensive at Kesternich and were massing forces near Monschau, where Americans have checked the initial momentum of the offensive.

SHAEF was silent on the German claim that Patton had joined the battle. It was disclosed officially that U.S. forces had withdrawn from the Emsdorf suburb of Saarlautern. Reports that Third Army troops had pulled out of hard-won Saarlautern and Dillingen bridgeheads were officially described as unfounded.

For the first time since the offensive started a week ago yesterday, the German news agency, as picked up by Reuter, reported that Nazi assault formations had passed temporarily to the defensive on the northern sector. German forces, however, recovered the initiative, the Nazi reports said.

The German news agency specified, according to Reuter, that Eisenhower threw in four new divisions to assail the base of Von Rundstedt's wedge in the north and that fighting in this sector was mounting in violence.

Nazis Surround Bastogne

SHAEF reports, 48 hours behind developments on yesterday's sunlit battlefield, said German tanks had surrounded Bastogne and probably had entered the town.

Another armored column continued 15 miles west of the Belgian road junction city to reach St. Hubert. This is 35 miles west of the Luxembourg-German frontier from Vlandon.

At St. Hubert, the Nazi spearheads are 29 miles north-northeast of the French city of Sedan, on the road of the 1940, 1914 and 1870 German invasions and 22 miles from the

French frontier in the Ardennes Forest.

On the south of the great wedge, the Echternach flank still held firm at the German-Luxembourg frontier. In central Luxembourg, enemy forces encircled Wiltz and gained control of the town.

An epic tank battle was reported by Associated Press over a nine-mile area west of St. Vith. The Press Association reported that American armor in this sector had kept the wedge split between the thrust to Habemont, two miles from the arterial Liège-Bastogne highway northwest of St. Vith, and Bastogne, Laroche and St. Hubert to the southwest.

Reuter from the front said U.S. infantrymen halted Von Rundstedt's tanks with bazookas, grenades and gasoline which the doughs poured over 70- and 80-ton enemy tanks in the first days of the counter-offensive.

Rows of Blackened Vehicles

Rows of blackened American vehicles, however, stand where they were smashed to a halt by German shells, the Reuter report said. The report added that German paratroops captured by Americans in this area said they were ordered to get the banks of the Meuse River.

Associated Press front reports said 150 German tanks had been knocked out in one sector in five days of fighting. The reports said enemy armor has been forced off main roads with the result that German tanks were sticking in the mud, where American artillery can pound them.

More German tank losses were reported in the Bastogne-Wiltz sector, where 55 tanks and assault guns were wrecked, official reports said. In the Malmédy area, where furious tank combat had been raging, another 28 enemy tanks and assault guns were knocked out.

Official reports covering the first six days of Germany's most powerful smash since 1940 indicated that enemy spearheads had plunged 35 to 40 miles through Allied lines. While signs of the push slowing down had been perceived, it had not been held except on its flanks.

Disarmament Proposal Submitted by ELAS

ATHENS, Dec. 23 (AP).—Counter-proposals to end the hostilities between the ELAS, left-wing Greek resistance forces, and the British were submitted by ELAS leaders yesterday, and the British promised a reply on Monday. Meanwhile, fighting continued.

Monastery Held Despite 3-Day Siege by Nazis

WITH AMERICAN FORCES, Dec. 23.—The front door was in range of German machine gun fire, the back yard infiltrated by the enemy and at times there were Germans on the roof, but a small group from an infantry division held out in monastery for three days and nights. Then were outnumbered almost 20 to one.

There were no Germans in the immediate vicinity when 1/Lt. George W. Thoms, of Appleton, Wis., and four other soldiers moved in. But later, 2/Lt. Robert E. Harkins, of Brooklyn, saw a Nazi walking into the hunting lodge about 50 yards away.

Before the remainder of the company arrived, the Germans attacked. Pfc Ernest Stone, of Hamilton, Ala., went for help, encountered fire but led reinforcements across two open fields in a hail of bullets.

To avoid revealing its plight a radio message was sent. "In our new home. Front door looking at objective, back door plenty hot."

Fought off 6 Attacks

Completely surrounded, the company then fought off six attacks. Their only food was raw sugarbeets. To get water, they ran a gauntlet of fire to a nearby stream. Ammunition was running low. The wounded loaded clips and collected ammo from the dead.

There were hand-to-hand encounters in the underground passages. They fought in the rooms, in the corridors, and on the roof.

Sgt. Lyman Heckman, of Fillmore, Mo., accounted for 20 dead and more than 20 wounded with his BAR.

Late the third day, advancing American units outflanked the enemy besiegers and the battle of the monastery was over.

Among those recommended for awards are: 1/Lt. Donald Hess, York, Pa.; 2/Lt. Frederick Preuss, Brooklyn; 2/Lt. Chauncey Hill, Phoenix; S/Sgt. Robert Bertram, Indianapolis; S/Sgt. Grant West, Brasstown, N.C.; Sgt. Autmer Bayler, Pomeroy, Ohio; Sgt. Garland Kirk, Prescott, Ark.; Sgt. Elbert Hall, Fitzgerald, Ga., and Cpl. G. F. Pearse, St. Louis.

Forts Hammer Nagoya Planter

(Continued from page 1)

Island there still was no ground opposition but the enemy continued their air raids, losing nine planes in combat and two to anti-aircraft fire.

B24s flying from Leyte airfields blasted airfields on Manila last night, starting big fires while other heavies bombed Jap bases on the isolated Marshall Islands in the Central Pacific.

(Tokyo Radio claimed yesterday that Jap suicide squadrons sank six U.S. transports, two cruisers and one destroyer off Mindoro Friday.)

In Burma, the British yesterday seized Tigyanb on the Irrawaddy River, 42 miles south of Katha. To the east, Chinese troops cut the Bhamo-Namhram railway, SEAC announced.

Eventful Career

Nearing the completion of its second year overseas, the 813th TD Bn., now with the Seventh Army, has knocked out 41 tanks, eight SP guns, numerous AA, AT and machine guns, pillboxes and mortars and has taken about 700 prisoners in Africa, Sicily, Italy and France.