



THE STARS AND STRIPES

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in the European Theater of Operations



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Sea-Air Fleet Hammering Truk

Tank Battle On in Anzio Bridgehead

British Weather Enemy's Heaviest Assault, Then Open Counter-Attack

German armor and infantry, reinforced by a great artillery barrage and the strongest Luftwaffe support since the Anzio landing, flung itself yesterday at the Allied bridgehead south of Rome for the second day in assaults which Berlin radio said rivaled the heaviest fighting in France in the last year of World War I.

The German high command, far from claiming any sweeping victory, admitted that the Fifth Army lines were holding under the strong Nazi offensive.

In the British-defended sector of Carroceto, ten miles north of Anzio, Allied and German tanks were locked in a bitter struggle as Lt. Gen. Mark W. Clark's British forces, after holding violent enemy thrusts, launched a counter-attack.

Hope to 'Narrow' Bridgehead
Substantiating Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson's report in Washington yesterday that the Allied hold on the bridgehead was firm, although fierce fighting lay ahead, German sources declared last night that Kesselring's new drive was not designed to smash the bridgehead but to narrow it.

Preceding the enemy's concerted tank and infantry attacks in the northern part of the bridgehead was an artillery barrage described by the Germans as the greatest of the Italian campaign.

The Luftwaffe, making its biggest effort of the Anzio battle, flew 130 sorties to bomb and strafe Allied troops.

German aerial activity, however, was dwarfed by the Allied mark—3,800 sorties in three days.

Rome Is Bombed
Besides providing cover for the Fifth Army, Lt. Gen. Ira C. Eaker's air forces bombed the German supply lines north and south of Rome, hitting 15 of the most important railroad targets in Italy, including two in Rome itself. The assault was the second raid on Rome in two days.

Although there were no reports of fighting around the American-held sector of Cisterna, the Germans claimed they had laid down a terrific artillery barrage on U.S. troops.

On the main Fifth Army front before Cassino, hard fighting continues as Americans fought in the streets of the two-thirds of the town still in German hands and bombers again hit Nazi positions around the demolished Benedictine Monastery on Mount Cassino.

There were no reports that U.S. troops had occupied the vital height overlooking Cassino, but they were presumably massing for a drive up the mountain slopes, along which the Germans have prepared elaborate fortifications.

Keep Your Shirts On, Stimson Tells Anzio Pessimists

WASHINGTON, Feb. 17—Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson, declaring that there was no foundation for a pessimistic view of the Italian campaign, told a press conference today that the Allied bridgehead was firmly established despite last week's determined German effort to smash it.

Echoing a warning given by Gen. Alexander against lending credence to reports of disaster, Stimson asked the nation to discard its excessive gloom and adopt a "broader and less mercurial view" toward the necessarily severe battles to come.

In a report on the progress of the war in various theaters, Stimson pointed out that better weather, which would allow the Allies to use to great advantage their superiority in artillery, tanks and anti-aircraft guns, had created a much more optimistic picture on the bridgehead.

He warned, however, that much heavier attacks than those already repelled might be expected from the 17 German divisions in Italy, but advised pessimists to "keep their shirts on."

With the semi-encirclement of Cassino, Stimson said, the Allies held the initiative on the main Fifth Army front.

U.S. casualties in Italy since the beginning of the campaign included 4,158 killed, 18,154 wounded and 6,429 missing, Stimson revealed.

U.S. Reveals 9th Air Force Now Operating From Britain

Supreme headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force, disclosed last night that elements of the Ninth U.S. Air Force had been incorporated with the Allied Air Forces controlled by Air Chief Marshal Sir Trafford Leigh-Mallory.

It was the first Allied acknowledgment of the Ninth's presence in this theater, although its aircraft have been operating from British bases for some time.

Maj. Gen. Louis H. Breton, who was its commander in the Middle East and in North Africa before the force moved here to form a team with the Eighth and the RAF, is in command, the announcement said.

As a tactical air force, the Ninth will show its full strength with medium bombers, fighter-bombers, attack-bombers and fighters, the announcement said.

It pointed out that a pattern for entry into Europe calls for air superiority before the land battle commences, and that Gen. Montgomery has always insisted that the enemy's air forces be neutralized before the ground forces went into battle. Action toward this goal would be the first assignment of the Ninth, headquarters said.

A second assignment, it continued, would be systematic attack on the railroads, marshaling yards and truck convoy routes leading to the enemy's replacement depots behind the lines. Still third assignment, after the landings had been effected, would be to bomb selected targets in the battle area along with other elements of the U.S., British and Allied air forces.

Soviets Liquidate Trap; 52,000 Germans Killed

Final liquidation of the ten trapped Nazi divisions in the Ukraine was announced by Marshal Stalin last night in an order of the day which said 52,000 Germans were killed in the 14 days' fighting and 11,000 were taken prisoner.

Stalin's order revealed that in addition to the ten divisions previously known to be hemmed in north and west of Kirovograd, the Soviet Second Ukraine Army also trapped one brigade of the German Eighth Army.

"All the German arms and equipment have been captured," Stalin said, announcing 20 salvos of 224 guns in Moscow in celebration of the victory.

Closing of the pocket came after 14 days' ceaseless but futile counter-attacks by powerful Nazi tank forces under Marshal Von Manstein. Dozens of tanks were left charred wrecks as Manstein battered fruitlessly at the Soviet steel ring.

Meanwhile, in the far north, Russian columns pushed within 20 miles of Pskov, meeting sharply increased resistance from German rearguards fighting a delaying action.

Soviet capture of Samolva, on the eastern shore of the narrows linking Lake Peipus and Lake Pskov, developed a new threat to Pskov, gateway to Latvia and Estonia, and also to the Pskov-Riga railway.

In some places the narrows are less than a mile wide, and a push across here and then a drive southward—in all a march of only 25 miles—would land the Russians along the rail line and highway linking the Pskov junction and the Latvian capital.

Fighting before Pskov increased in intensity as the Germans called up big forces of tommy-gunners, supported by tanks and mortars, to fight delaying actions at strategic villages. Engineers mined roads, blew up bridges—and set booby traps in forest paths.

The Russians' answer to this rearguard resistance was to swing off the highways, encircle enemy strongpoints under cover of darkness and smash Nazi communications. The continuing progress of the Red drive increased the outflanking threat facing the Nazi fortress at Staraya Russa, where Berlin yesterday reported strong local attacks by the Soviet armies.

At the same time, the German communique announced that the ten-day battle for Vitebsk had been renewed after a 24-hour lull. Berlin also reported Russian attacks near Cherkassy and Krivoi Rog, in the Ukraine.

MP's \$2,000,000 Inheritance Shrinks to a Paltry \$200,000

Pvt. Ben Violette, of South Bend, Ind., is only one-tenth as rich today as he was reported to be yesterday. A United Press dispatch from Milton, Ont., disclosed that the 26-year-old MP in London had been left between \$50,000 and \$200,000 by his aunt, Mrs. Mary Martin, instead of the \$2,000,000 reported in yesterday's newspapers.

The true amount was revealed by the Ontario probate records. Mrs. Martin, who died at Oakville, Ont., last December, left more than \$1,000,000. A share of this, estimated to be between \$50,000 and \$200,000, was left to Violette, and

Big U.S. Task Force Launches Assault on Japs' 'Pearl Harbor'

1,000 Are Lost On Troopship Near Europe

WASHINGTON, Feb. 17 (Reuter)—The War Department announced today that an Allied troopship with American soldiers on board has been sunk in European waters.

One thousand men were rescued and another 1,000 are reported missing.

The text of the war department announcement says:

"Military security now permits the disclosure that an Allied ship was sunk on an undisclosed date in European waters. The sinking was caused by enemy action at night time.

"U.S. soldiers were aboard the ship in large numbers.

"It is believed that the enemy does not know the results of this action for which reason the date has been withheld."

The sinking was one of the worst disasters involving American forces at sea since the war started.

Heavy seas were running at the time.

Gen. Eisenhower On Tour of U.K.

Chats With Soldiers at Surprise Inspections; Tedder Is Along

Gen. Eisenhower is engaged in a whirlwind tour of the United Kingdom with his deputy, Air Chief Marshal Sir Arthur Tedder, to visit field units of every type in the Allied Expeditionary Force, it was announced last night by Supreme Allied Headquarters.

Travelling in a special train—which is constantly in touch with headquarters by radio and carries its own motor transportation, also radio-equipped—the commanding general is following a long-established practice of visiting all units in his command. In the Mediterranean theater, the longest he ever stayed in Algiers was 13 days.

On the present tour, which is punctuated by quick return visits to headquarters, Gen. Eisenhower told one group of enlisted men:

"If you can fight as well as you're doing this training, God help the Nazis."

There are no parades nor formal assemblages when he arrives at a unit. Commanding officers have been requested specifically to continue the training program, whether it be mere calisthenics or amphibious landing under live fire.

At one seasoned infantry outfit, the general's visit turned into an informal review. Troops marching down a road saw the four-star car approaching and gave the customary "eyes right." At every platoon, however, the car would stop and the general would step out and motion two or three men out of formation.

"How's your chow and your billets?" was a standard question. Or: "Where is your home?" and "How long have you been here?"

Checking closely on food, equipment (Continued on page 4)

Great Base Is Key To the Central Pacific War

WASHINGTON, Feb. 17—Powerful U.S. Navy task forces of the Pacific Fleet, with several hundred airplanes participating, opened an attack on Japan's great Central Pacific base at Truk early yesterday morning, Adm. Chester W. Nimitz announced at Pearl Harbor tonight.

The Pacific commander-in-chief's communique, announced by the Navy Department here, said the attack began at daylight and that no further details were available.

Truk, reputed to be one of the strongest naval bases in the world, is in the Carolines about 1,000 miles west of the nearest Allied occupied territory—the islands of Kwajalein atoll in the Marshalls.

The attack coincided with a "heavy blasting" of Ponape, in the eastern Carolines, less than 380 miles east of Truk, by U.S. Seventh Air Force Liberators. At the same time, Southwest Pacific reports said Kavieng, New Ireland, was a "mass of flames" after another heavy air assault.

First Smash at Base
The Navy's assault on Truk was the first reported attack by Allied warships on Japan's central Pacific "Pearl Harbor" in the heart of the mandated Carolines.

Radio silence enforced deep secrecy concerning the progress of the operation, but if the raid was timed to catch Japanese warships in Truk lagoon and was a surprise, it was conceivable that torpedo planes and bombers could have sunk or damaged many vessels. There was no hint as to the numbers of ships actually in the lagoon.

The enemy naval base at Truk, large enough to accommodate all known ships of the Japanese Fleet and believed to contain a first-class battleship anchorage, is surrounded by hundreds of small islands. It has been visited by only a handful of non-Japanese in the 25 years the Nipponese have been in control.

News of the attack, flashed by radio and late afternoon newspaper editions, electrified the U.S. Naval circles in the Capital hailed it as the boldest stroke of the Pacific war.

Two months ago an American task force in the Central Pacific sailed close to Truk, but the Japanese battle fleet failed to come out—suggesting to some quarters that the enemy naval command had withdrawn battleships and carriers to Japanese home waters.

Truk was the pivot of Japan's naval strategy in the Central Pacific. From there, Japanese task forces struck out west, south and east, and from there the great battle fleet mauled in the Battle of Midway was supposed to have sailed. It was from Truk, also, that the enemy sailed to the Battle of the Coral Sea.

Before the war Truk had the largest population of any of the Carolines. Today it shares with Ponape Jap admini-

(Continued on page 4)



Joan Barry Fights Results Of Chaplin Blood Tests

LOS ANGELES, Feb. 17—Counsel for Joan Barry, 22, who accused Charlie Chaplin of fathering her child, said today he would not consent to dismissal of her paternity suit until further investigation of blood tests which "exonerated" the comedian.

Attorney John J. Irwin, claiming that drugs have been known to change the characteristics of human blood, said he wanted to determine whether Chaplin might have taken drugs before having his blood typed last Tuesday.

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Hash Marks

Some guys at a certain camp are still wondering if their mess hall menu contained a typographical error or not. Dessert was listed as micemert pie.

A Marine sergeant and a Navy chief petty officer, just back from the Solomons, were spending their first leave in Los Angeles.



After a night of painting the town red they retired to their rooms, which happened to be in the same hotel. In the wee small hours, a truck driver dumped a packing case outside the building—the crash resounding throughout the hotel. The Marine and the Navy guy leaped from their beds, dashed into the corridor half asleep. They collided in the hall, grappled and finally became fully awake. "No foxholes out here," said the Navy chief sheepishly. "Nope, guess we don't need any," replied the Sarge—and both went quietly back to bed.

There's a lieutenant in an AG section over here whose face is very, very red these days. In fact, he's quite a queue-happy lad. He met his date and whipped into one of London's largest restaurants for a snack. There were two queues, one to the right and one to the left. The one to the left was shorter; so he joined it. In a few minutes he heard someone giggling. He looked around but saw nothing funny. The giggling continued at regular intervals, much to his bewilderment, and finally the place was in an uproar. At that moment his queue moved close enough to its destination for the lieutenant to discover that he was headed for a door quaintly lettered, "Ladies."

This little verse was left in our typewriter by an anonymous visitor. We hope you like it.



"I wonder if I shall ever see 'A Pic with a T.'"

The last straw. A dreamy-eyed gal back in the States wrote her boy friend over here, "Say, Eddie, tell me what ETO means—I gather it's something like our USO."

J. C. W.

Ground Forces Stage a Rehearsal



Tanks Win 'Battle' After Bridgehead Is Secured

By G. K. Hodenfield

Stars and Stripes Staff Writer

AN ARMORED UNIT HQ, Feb. 17—Earlier this week a portion of the coast of England rocked under the explosions of heavy naval shells and echoed the gunshots of men who waded ashore from landing craft and stormed the beaches. It was an invasion rehearsal, a dry run of the landing that is coming this year on the beaches of Hitler's Europe.

But the landings are only the beginning—and here in the English countryside an armored unit has just completed a three-day maneuver that has proven to all who watched, as well as to those who took part, that the men and machines of this outfit will be ready when those other battles approach.

It was a three-day battle against a foe that was imaginary. But there was nothing phony about the live ammunition that went screaming from the snouts of a myriad of guns, nor about the anti-personnel shells that burst in the air and rained shrapnel against the tops and sides of the tanks as they lumbered forward.

To War in an M-4

This reporter went to war on the assistant driver's seat of a Gen. Sherman (M-4) tank. You don't get a very good idea of what a battle is all about through the narrow slit of a periscope that bounces every time the tank hits a bump (and you hit plenty of bumps in a tank). But you get a good idea of what the men of the armored force go through in combat.

In many respects a tank is like an airplane. There is a minimum of space, and a maximum of camaraderie. There are no frills, but complete teamwork. In the



Planet and OWI Photos

Top—Tanks and infantry attack a ridge during invasion maneuvers somewhere in Britain. Tank commander stands halfway out of turret, as in foreground, until vehicle comes under fire. Below—The light M8, new "mortar" of the Tank Corps, took part in recent invasion practice. Mounting a 75-mm. howitzer and .50-cal. machine-gun, it teams up with M5s, lobbing mortar-like shells into concealed positions with high-trajectory fire.

crew of five the responsibilities are well defined. The tank commander stands halfway out of the turret until the tank comes under fire; after that he continues to guide it by peering through his periscope. The gunner perches on the right side of the tank, the radio operator on the left. In combat the radio operator is also the gun loader for the 75-mm. cannon. The driver and his assistant sit down front, where the assistant mans a machine-gun.

The "Stars and Stripes Special" on this problem was the company command tank, commanded by Capt. Cameron J. Warren, of Lancaster, Pa. Warren, who used to be in the forestry service, is no newcomer to a tank, nor to the business of fighting the Axis. He has had combat experience in both Africa and Sicily and part of his job here is that of an instructor.

A Gunner-Farmer

The gunner was Cpl. Barnett E. Yoho, who used to be a farmer near New England, W. Va. The radio operator and gun-loader was T/5 Thomas E. Smith, of Dothan, Ala., and the driver was Pfc William J. Novak, an electrician from Cleveland. Absent in this particular problem was the assistant driver, T/5 Joseph P. Stoffa, a former machinist from Chairton, Pa.

As the exercise entered its final phase, the problem was well defined. The enemy had just entrenched behind the crest of a hill about two miles away. He had an outpost behind the crest of another hill, about 300 yards forward. Reconnaissance had shown that the enemy force was composed mostly of light tanks, and that he had no reinforcements in the immediate vicinity.

The attacking force included Shermans,

M-5 light tanks, M-10 tank destroyers, M-8s (75-mm. howitzer on M-5 chassis) and M-7s (Priests), self-propelled artillery mounting 105mm. cannon.

The earphones crackled and Capt. Warren gave his company the order to move off. The huge tanks lumbered forward in a tight defensive formation.

As the tanks moved toward the battle, the artillery began its barrage. Shells whistled overhead and landed sometimes just 100 yards ahead of us. As we moved forward, the barrage moved with us. Then the tanks opened up with their 3-inchers, and the "Stars and Stripes Special" jarrred backward each time a shell went "whooshing" away.

Battle Quickly Over

In a few moments we roared away again, crashing deep into a ravine and plunging out on the other side. As the tanks moved up the hill, the machine-guns began their chattering. And then, as suddenly as it had started, the chattering stopped and the infantry moved in. The outpost had fallen.

The main objective was still ahead, but the tactics were the same and the result was the same. It was that irresistible combination of artillery, tanks and infantry. It included deadly accurate fire power, the same sort the Germans know well from Africa and Italy.

And behind it all were the other components of any fighting force . . . the radio cars, command posts, ambulances and medics, and the armored forces' own pet—the M-25, the heavily armed "wrecker" that stays right up next to the fight and rescues damaged tanks.

This particular exercise was comparatively small. It was minute in terms of a second front.

Trial Balloon?—Yes

Before Plane Even Was Invented, The U.S. Army Had an Air Base

DENVER, Feb. 17 (AP)—The yellowed pages of an old magazine disclosed today that a U.S. Army air base was established at near-by Fort Logan in 1894, nearly two decades before the birth of modern aviation at Kittyhawk, N.C.

The Fort Logan public relation's office said the accidental discovery of an article in a 43-year-old copy of Harper's Monthly led to the conclusion that America's first balloon—the General Myer—was based at the Fort before the Spanish-American war.

"Back in 1892 the balloon was built, and exhibited at the Columbian World's Exposition at Chicago the following year," said the Army release. After its exhibitionary stages the balloon was used for purposes of instruction at the very small Signal Corps School at Fort Riley, Kan.

"In 1894 the balloon was transferred to Fort Logan, where a balloon house was built and the General Myer made its first home. Here Capt. W. A. Glassford, Signal Corps, devoted his attention to creating a training program, almost without money or materials. An aeronaut was enlisted and a few hundred dollars were allotted from signal appropriations. "Drills and practice work made a few men familiar with the balloon, and war conditions were simulated as far as possible. Messages were sent to and from the basket by telephone, and photographs were taken of the Denver area."

The balloon deteriorated and wind destroyed it while it was being inflated. Later, a few hundred dollars was obtained to replace it.

The declaration of war against Spain broke up the Fort Logan balloon detachment, said the Army.

Tax Time

Now for a moment consider the back-home taxpayer (nobody else will), as the merry month of March rolls round. In March John Q. Citizen will have a problem on his hands that's a honey. Already there's howling and cursing throughout the land, and it tops anything ever heard before as fifty million people try to probe the meaning of this year's mysterious tax form.

It reads like a pirate's directions where to dig for gold—a drunken pirate at that who couldn't remember just where he buried his hoard.

Even the Bureau of Internal Revenue is apologetic about the whole thing, and so is the Treasury Department. One official, quoted in the New York Times, says it probably will be "the form to end all forms." After this one must come either the deluge or the real tax simplification that has been talked about for years. Things can't get any worse in the income-tax form department.

The present form, says a Treasury official, isn't really the fault of his department and it isn't really anybody's fault—it just grew that way. On it can be faintly deciphered all the good and bad intentions of all Congresses which ever worked on a revenue bill, with all their past and present actions, reactions, advances and retreats. This year's form wasn't designed that way—it just accumulated. Before you get home, it will probably—or so everybody hopes—be legislated out of existence and a new form substituted, a form that won't increase the American insanity rate.

The revenue bill that Congress has recently finished has nothing to do with the present tax form, which is compounded of the victory tax, the withholding tax, the forgiveness of part of 1942's tax liability, plus their amendments.

The knowledge that those of us on foreign service won't have to work over this year's income-tax form should compensate in part for the Hell of War. Peace—remember—has its own sweet problems.



"Whadya know! Guess there was a diner on that ship buddy!"

