

## Christmas Eve in the ETO—1943



U.S. soldiers found time this week to make Christmas a little brighter for many English children by giving big parties all over the ETO. These scenes were taken at a London East Side orphanage and a Red Cross club.

### Russians Drive To Ring Vitebsk

#### German Forces Routed Near Nevel; Enemy Tanks Strike in Zhlobin Area

Russian cavalry and tanks, smashing west to achieve a wide encirclement of Vitebsk, have trapped and routed thousands of enemy troops in the marshes south of Nevel, Moscow claimed yesterday as German panzers launched a strong diversionary offensive southwest of Zhlobin.

Two new Russian penetrations into German lines northwest of Nevel were admitted last night by Col. Von Hammer, German military commentator, over Berlin radio. He claimed both were stopped.

Soviet dispatches described the success on the northern front as one of the sharpest defeats inflicted on the Germans since the fall of Kiev. They added, moreover, that the enemy's latest counter-offensive on the southern front already had failed.

Many of the Germans around Nevel, attempting to break through the Russian cavalry and armor, were destroyed in hand-to-hand fighting, Moscow reported.

#### Reds Beat off Attack

In one place a Russian battalion surrounded about a thousand Germans who counter-attacked repeatedly to try and escape, these reports said. The Russians beat them back, Moscow declared, even using rifle butts, spades and knives to finish them off in the trenches.

The Germans threw in heavy reinforcements of tanks and planes and launched as many as 13 counter-attacks a day. When these failed, they pulled back to prepared positions farther west.

Gen. Bagramyan's tanks, driving wedges into the German territory, were reported last night to be fighting their way through thick barbed wire entanglements forming the northernmost defenses of Vitebsk, while another arm of his force was said to be reaching westward for the Vitebsk-Polotsk railway.

Red Star, the Soviet Army newspaper, said the Germans launched their offensive.

(Continued on page 4)

### FDR Sees Gen. Marshall, Adm. Leahy and Stimson

WASHINGTON, Dec. 23 (UP)—President Roosevelt conferred today with Gen. George C. Marshall, Army chief of staff, Adm. William D. Leahy, the President's chief of staff, and Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson.

Gen. Marshall returned to the capital today after his trip to the Southwest Pacific theater and the Middle East conferences.

### That There May Be Peace on Earth Chapels Call Yanks to Prayer In Their Last Pre-Invasion Noel

In churches and improvised chapels, in mess halls and barracks and in the homes of the British people, American soldiers will celebrate quietly tomorrow the last Christmas before they strike the blow intended to hasten lasting peace on earth. Some, indeed, will be obliged to spend their holiday on maneuver grounds where they are training for that assault.

Forgetting for the moment their holiday nostalgia for the lighted Christmas trees and the snow-blanketed fields at home, thousands of troops will entertain British children at parties in camps, and other thousands will share turkey dinners in private homes, bearing out the words of Ambassador John G. Winant in his Christmas message to them:

"Christmas for us will always be a day of homecoming . . . we are far from home, but we know the worth of kindly comradeship, and we are stationed in a friendly country."

Lt. Gen. Jacob L. Devers, ETOUSA commander, observing in his Christmas message, that many American soldiers would spend their holiday with English families, pointed out that such friendships "have a significance which will reach beyond the battlefield and, after victory, will be instrumental in helping to mold lasting peace and lasting world freedom."

The general's message assured the troops that they could "face the New Year with confidence." "The enemy," he said, "has been forced to take the defense."

(Continued on page 4)

### A Bomber's Bomber Boomerang, Which Smacked Ploesti, Is First 50-Mission Lib

Boomerang, a Ploesti veteran which has dumped bombs on more than half a dozen countries in Europe and Africa in 14 months of combat, was announced yesterday as the first Liberator in the ETO to complete 50 missions.

Her 50th raid—an attack on the German submarine-building center of Bremen—was with an almost new crew gathered together by 2/Lt. Kelley Ritter, of Lumberton, N.C., pilot, in the absence of the Lib's regular combat men.

It was a lucky mission—luckier than the first one, when Boomerang was damaged so severely by enemy action she was nearly grounded for good. Mechanics put her together again.

On the recent Bremen raid, completing her string, flak scratched her name and hit the nose but that was all. There was no serious damage.

Eighth Air Force's listing of Boomer-

ang's targets reads like a geography lesson—Germany and France, Norway and Poland, Tunisia, Sicily, Italy and Rumania.

She knew bases in England, North Africa and the Middle East and flew in all kinds of weather and very nearly against all kinds of opposition.

Boomerang went three times to St. Nazaire's submarine pens, to hotly defended Vegesack and Wilhelmshaven, raided Rommel's supplies in Bizerte, Palermo, Sousse and Messina, and twice attacked Naples.

Last Aug. 1 came the low-level blasting of the Ploesti oil refineries in Rumania, and 13 days later a 2,400-mile round trip to the Wiener-Neustadt airplane works near Vienna. Two months ago, the big Lib drove deep into Europe to bomb Nazi naval installations at Danzig, and more recently she added targets in Norway to the string.

### Revenge Threat Fails to Stir U.S.

#### Nazis Say They Might Try Airmen in Reprisal for Soviet Atrocity Case

A German Foreign Office threat to try American and British war prisoners for alleged violations of international law, in reprisal for the Russians' Kharkov atrocity trials, met a cool reception yesterday in the United States.

Washington reports said the U.S. public regarded it as a piece of bluff, intended chiefly for home consumption in Germany.

In the first place, capital dispatches said, international law places in entirely different categories American and British airmen, who carry out military missions over Germany, and Nazi soldiers or members of the Gestapo who murder innocent civilians.

In the second place, the U.S. has three times as many German war prisoners as Germany holds Americans.

### Walker Says Even FDR Isn't Sure on a 4th Term

WASHINGTON, Dec. 23—Declaring that it was too early to make any statement on the prospect of a fourth term, Postmaster Gen. Frank Walker, chairman of the Democratic National Committee, told reporters yesterday that President Roosevelt himself did not know whether he would run for a fourth term.

### Three-Fifths of Fliers Lost At Schweinfurt Are POWs

WASHINGTON, Dec. 23 (AP)—The U.S. War Department announced today that of 581 crew members reported missing when 60 Flying Fortresses were lost at Schweinfurt, 346 were alive and prisoners of war.

#### Second Knife Murder

CHEYENNE, Wyo., Dec. 23—Search for the apparently mad slasher of William Earl last July was redoubled after the mutilated body of Joe Blacksmith, a 45-year-old Indian, was found in a gulley. Blacksmith was knifed, beaten, tied to a post and left to die.

#### Blaze Destroys Warehouse

MONROE, Mich., Dec. 23—A fire caused damage estimated at \$100,000 to the Floral City Furniture Warehouse here. A large stock of furniture slated for Christmas delivery was destroyed.

#### A Yearly Event

WASHINGTON, Dec. 23—As in years past, President Roosevelt will read Dickens' Christmas Carol to the family gathering at Hyde Park tomorrow night.

### Nazis Fight Fiercely for Italian Port

#### Germans Dying in Streets of Battered Ortona; 5th Wins Heights

ALGIERS, Dec. 23 (AP)—Tanks and infantry of the Eighth Army fought bitterly in the streets of Ortona for the third successive day, with the Germans turning the tiny Adriatic port into a miniature Stalingrad.

Tanks and infantry advanced from house-to-house, everywhere meeting fierce opposition, with the Germans dying in their tracks rather than retreat.

On the American and French Fifth Army sector, American troops captured the snow-covered 3,000-foot Mount Monte Cavallo, three and a half miles northwest of Venafro. French troops on the northern sector advanced along a mountain pass which has been the scene of several days of fighting.

Rain drenched the Fifth Army front and air activity was reduced to the minimum.

#### It's Raining Again

Other U.S. infantrymen, attacking in the rain, captured a hill near Monna Casale.

The Germans tried to recapture Mount Monte Cavallo, but were thrown back. The systematic clean-up of pill boxes around San Vittore continued, and there was no indication of any large attack on this key village guarding the road to Rome.

The German Tenth Army threw in parachute troops as infantry in a desperate attempt to hold the Ortona anchor of their line.

Farther inland Indian troops pushed north of the Ortona-Osogna road towards the next lateral main road six miles away, and approached the strongly fortified village of Ariella, seven miles inland from Ortona. Here another house-to-house battle appeared to be imminent.

German troops launched a small-scale night attack against Eighth Army positions at St. Angelo, but were flung back.

#### Tito's Men Gain

Marshal Tito's partisan armies yesterday smashed a desperate German attempt to capture at any cost the vital Sarajevo-Mostar-Metkovic railway, linking southwest Yugoslavia with Germany, Austria and Italy.

The German offensive was launched 20 days ago. Masses of infantry and tanks were hurled against the partisans, but at every point they were beaten back.

Last night the Germans were regrouping their scattered forces in readiness for yet another onslaught.

Unless the Germans can wrest control of the Sarajevo-Mostar-Metkovic railway they cannot hope to pour a steady flow of reinforcements and supplies into southwestern Yugoslavia for the winter campaign.

#### Photos Win a DSC

WITH THE FIFTH ARMY, Dec. 23 (AP)—Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower visited Italy yesterday and while at Lt. Gen. Mark W. Clark's headquarters presented the DSC to Lt. Col. Karl L. Polifka, of Watsonville, Cal.

The award was for four low-level flights Polifka made on Nov. 26 to photograph enemy positions, including artillery positions which for more than three weeks had been holding up the progress of the Fifth Army. Polifka took pictures, the citation said, which made possible "the complete destruction or capture" of the positions.

### Pope's Yule Eve Midnight Mass Broadcast Cancelled

The Pope's midnight mass which was to have been broadcast on Christmas Eve has been cancelled, according to an official statement quoted by Vatican radio. The reason for the cancellation was said to be "the present 6 o'clock curfew in Rome."

Instead, the Pope will celebrate a mass in private. This ceremony will be broadcast at 4 PM Christmas Eve.

### No Paper on Christmas

No editions of The Stars and Stripes will be published Christmas Day or Boxing Day, Dec. 27. An eight-page edition carrying all the news of the holiday weekend in the ETO will be published Tuesday, Dec. 28.

THE STARS AND STRIPES

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Hash Marks

Looks like Berlin will have a White Christmas—ashes.

And speaking of Berlin, the Berlin press is really on the ball. A daily printed there recently carried an article on "How To Make A Will."

It happens once in a Lifetime: Out somewhere in the wilds of Virginia, Lt. Col. J. Meyung, a new commander, was



running along the line in a practice march, dressed in fatigue clothes. Suddenly a sergeant tapped him on the shoulder and barked, "Wotthehell are you waiting for—get in line!" The colonel started to sputter, then suddenly realized that he had dressed in such a hurry he had forgotten to pin on his silver leaves. Before the tough sarge could snarl again, the "rankless" colonel had stepped meekly in line with the rest of the GIs.

A precious addition to our Name In Initials Club—Cpl. George Edward McCarthy. And also our first legal mind, Leighton A. Wederath, of the TJA office.

Candidate for the title, "Man With The Reddest Face in the ETO" is T/Sgt. Sammy Levine, foreman of a parachute



shop. For Christmas, Levine got two RECORDINGS, made by his girl friend back in Richmond, Va. He made a dash for his day room where a new phonograph-radio combination had just been installed. There was nobody around but a sleepy Pfc, who tactfully left when he heard the lush messages coming out of the phonograph. So Levine was in his glory—playing the records over and over, listening intently to the sweet messages of love and endearment. What Levine DID NOT find out until much, much later was that five loudspeakers had been purchased with the set, the five barracks nearest the day room were wired for sound—and countless of his buddies were enjoying the lush messages from the comfort of their bunks. "Tain't fair!"

A Pfc just stuck his head in the door and wished us a "Jerry Christmas and a Jappy New Year!" Which reminds us, it's nearly "closing time"—so best wishes for the holiday season to all! J. C. W.

Merry Christmas—1943

Christmas messages to the American troops were issued yesterday by Lt. Gen. Jacob L. Devers, commanding general of ETOUSA, and John G. Winant, American Ambassador to Britain. The messages follow:

From the Commanding General Your conduct in this theater has been of a high order. With incredibly few individual exceptions your soldierly bearing, your determination and courage have been most exemplary.

This has been a source of the deepest gratification, and so heartening to me personally, during past months, that I am taking the opportunity afforded by the Christmas season to express my most sincere and lasting appreciation.

In a foreign land, under circumstances which frequently have been extraordinarily difficult, all arms and services in the ground forces, supply forces and air forces have acquitted themselves with remarkable zeal and often with intrepidity surpassing the call of duty.

This reveals a high type of self-respect, esprit and loyalty to our nation. Also it reveals an intelligent grasp of the reasons for our presence in the ETO.

On this day I believe you will find a large measure of happiness in the hospitality proffered by the courageous people of the United Kingdom, and also in friendly acts repaying that hospitality.

These are matters which will remain pleasantly in your memory. You will find that favorable impressions and friendships have a significance which will reach beyond the battlefield and, after victory, will be instrumental in helping to mold lasting peace and lasting world freedom.

You may face the New Year with confidence. The enemy has been forced to take the defensive in every theater. Final victory is no longer uncertain.

In concert with our Allies we have the means—both manpower and materials—to bring this war to a successful conclusion, which will place in the hands of the Allies the power, with God's help, to rebuild the world along lines that you and I and all freedom-loving people desire.

My thoughts are with you on this day and will continue to be with you throughout the New Year.

LT. GEN. JACOB L. DEVERS, Commanding General, ETOUSA.

Christmas Message from the Ambassador

I have been asked by the Editor of The Stars and Stripes to write a Christmas message to the soldiers and civilians who are in the European Theater of Operations. I am happy to do this.

War with its heroism and its hardship teaches us much about life, for some of us in easier circumstances have never been without light or known much of cold or hunger or thirst, or the complete sense of comradeship that is born on the battlefield until we faced war. Even the barnyards of France in the last great fight in which we were joined together as allies lifted a veil for some of us and allowed us to see more clearly and to feel with deeper understanding the story of the Child in the Manger. It had to do with life at its beginning and in the end—sacrifice. It fell within the ken of a soldier's understanding. It became part of a soldier's faith.

I was asked to say a special word to those who are engaged in civil tasks. I can only wish for them that they see behind the humdrum of the ordinary routine and the life that lies back of paper work, the chance they have to serve the fighting man.

Christmas for us will always be a day of homecoming, and we are far from home, but we know the worth of kindly comradeship, and we are stationed in a friendly country. We are grateful that we have a chance to protect the homes where we first caught a glimpse of Christmas Day, and where stockings still hang over the firesides and children laugh and play because none dare invade our land, while we march forward with our face toward the enemy.

JOHN G. WINANT.

OWI in Tribute to U.S. Airlines; Speeded Retaking of Aleutians

WASHINGTON, Dec. 23 — Retaking of the Aleutians would have been postponed for months if American airlines had not been able to fly in men and cargo quickly and in quantity, the Office of War Information asserted in a report detailing the "highly strategic war roles" played by 18 domestic lines and three international lines. "When the Japanese fleet had split at Midway, one wing turning back under heavy American air blows, the other heading for Alaska," the report said, "ten U.S. airlines—Pan American, United, American, Northwest, Pennsylvania-Central, TWA, Chicago and Southern, Western, Braniff and Panagra—flew planes into Alaska. "They transported special troops and military equipment to Dutch Harbor. Airline pilots delivered many Army bombers, with their crews and bombs. The Naval Air Transport Service flew personnel and material into Alaskan and Aleutian bases in squadrons of three planes each—utilizing one pilot familiar with the territory, the other two flying in formation. "Even as the Japanese were attacking Dutch Harbor," the report said, "airliners were coming in at the airport with war materials." Not until the end of the war, OWI said, could the airlines' contribution to the successful defense of Alaska be fully evaluated. The route to Alaska, the report disclosed, is one of four principal world airways with innumerable branch and feeder lines operated by the Naval Air Transport Service and Air Transport Command of the Army, both of which depend on planes and personnel of commercial airlines. One route spans the North Atlantic, either non-stop or in several stages. Another is by stages from the southern U.S. to Africa and across Africa to the Middle East, India and China. A third, from southern California by way of Hawaii, serves Pacific bases and the fourth runs from the U.S. Northwest to Alaska and the Aleutians. At home, OWI said, domestic airlines have more than doubled their pre-war volume of cargo and are carrying nearly twice as much airmail as in 1941. Although the nation's domestic and international airlines have sold or leased to the Army and Navy 244 of their pre-war strength of 434 airplanes—In the first half of 1943, the domestic lines flew 1,428,888 passengers compared with 1,567,608 in the first half of '41. Express cargo flown by domestic lines in the first half of '43 amounted to 28,803,546 pounds, compared to 7,804,508 pounds in the corresponding period of '41. Domestic airmail in the first half of '43—50,504,847 pounds—was more than the 43,279,838 pounds carried in all of 1941. The OWI report went into detail concerning the commercial lines' part in operating world transport lines for the Army and Navy, supplying trained personnel and repairing, modifying and testing military aircraft. Major emphasis was placed, however, on Alaskan operations, described as "one of the most difficult of the airlines' war activities."

Notes from the Air Force

KICKED around a bit once by three fighter pilots as a bad luck omen, Thunderbolt—a black cat—now is drawing extra milk and spam rations from the same three fighter pilots.

Before taking off on a recent mission, Capt. Walter V. Cook, of Cincinnati, went to the parachute room for his chute, and found the black cat sleeping on it, and tossed her aside. Maj. Horace C. Craig, of Summerfield, Ohio, entered, found Thunderbolt on his chute, and gave her the bounce. Lt. Col. David C. Schilling, of Detroit, threw her out the doorway. Then all three hoped for no bad luck.

After scores of the mission were tabulated, it looked as if the cat had brought the wearers of the parachutes luck. Capt. Cook, Maj. Craig and Col. Schilling each had shot down two enemy planes. And that wasn't all. Col. Schilling led a group that chalked up a record by bagging 26 Germans, Maj. Craig led a squadron that chalked up its own record by downing 15 Jerries, and Capt. Cook led a flight of three fighters which shot down six enemy aircraft.

The champion runner of his Flying Fortress station is T/Sgt. Sam B. Rhea, of Greenville, Tenn. The 21-year-old radio operator claims he ran 500 miles from England to Solingen, Germany.

The temperature was 52 degrees below zero on the raid on the Ruhr industrial city. Much too cold for Rhea, so he started running in his radio room. And, as he says, he ran from England to Solingen and back again.

A LONG-RANGE mission to Norway gave the crew of the Liberator Wildcat a chance to live up to its name. Almost to the target after a 700-mile trip, the Wildcat had to drop out of formation when its four super-chargers quit simultaneously.

After the ship had dropped to 4,000 feet, the engines coughed back to life and under the piloting of Capt. Russell D. DeMont, of Tucson, Ariz., the Wildcat fought up again and on to bomb the target alone.

Ju88s jumped the plane as it returned from the target, but the Wildcat scrapped back, and four German planes were probably destroyed by Sgt. William J. Nelson, Higganum, Conn., left waist gunner, scoring two; S/Sgt. Raymond J. Russell, Beverly, N.J., and Sgt. James H. McMahon, St. Albans, N.Y., right waist gunner.

1/Lt. George B. Stewart, of Athens, Ga., navigator, was finishing his tour of missions on the Norway trip. "When those four super-chargers quit, I thought I might be finishing up in more ways than one," he said.

Soldier's Medals have been awarded Sgt. Clyde V. Engholm, of St. Charles, Mo., and S/Sgt. Kenneth Shanahan, of Eureka, Cal., for extinguishing a fire in a trailer which threatened to spread to a nearby gasoline dump at their bomber station.

They had just driven their truck to the dump and started to refill it when a fire broke out in the trailer. Although burned on the hands and face, Shanahan unhitched the cab of the trailer and drove it away.

Then he returned to help Engholm, who was battling the flames with a hand extinguisher. In spite of the danger that the dump might catch fire and blow up, the men fought the fire until it was put out.

2/Lt. James B. Smith, of San Antonio, Tex., made eight trips as a fighter pilot over the Continent without destroying a German fighter. On the ninth, however, he rammed one and then, literally standing on the rudder pedals to control his damaged Thunderbolt, raced in behind another Nazi fighter and shot it down.

Smith's ninth mission took him deep into Germany escorting U.S. heavy bombers. Seeing an Me109 attacking his P47 formation from the rear, Smith swung around, opened fire and chased the German into the sun.

Then he turned left and discovered the Me right over him. Smith made a violent turn and his tail smashed the Nazi fighter's engine, propeller and oil cooler.

The last Smith saw of the Me it was spinning toward the earth with smoke streaming from it.

Rejoining his section, Smith saw another enemy plane on the tail of a P47. He gave the German ship a long burst, smoke poured from the engine and the pilot stood up in the cockpit, apparently trying to bail out.



ARMY POETS

To An Army Nurse

Here where the stars are shut out by strong walls, And where the moon's pale hand can bring no light, In straight and even rows we lie, One face to every measured patch of white. We watch the toiling fingers of the clock, And count the slow procession of the days, And think of winds and clouds, and trees and grass, And soaring planes swift-racing thro' the haze. The tinkling bell then calls us from our thoughts, And we are grateful as your step is heard, Not for your cooling drink or skilful touch, But for your quiet smile and friendly word. Pfc Jay E. Greene.

ETO Christmas 1943

In most army camps in this theater there is already a festive spirit that would surprise most folks at home, and although no one, especially those with experience, would pick an army tent camp in England, a Nissen hut in Ireland or an airbase in Scotland as a holiday resort, it must be remembered that most GIs are spending Christmas with friends . . . their own service pals or British hosts, and those who are not constitute a small minority.

It may bring some degree of comfort to a good many people at home to know that those in whom they have a close and personal interest stand many chances of being moderately comfortable and well fed this Christmas, to one chance of being under the cruel and uncomfortable conditions that exist during aerial or other combat operations. As a matter of fact there will be a good many thousand truly happy faces today in this theater, for this is Christmas Eve and parties of every type and description are planned for the troops and by the troops for others less fortunate.

British homes have also been thrown open by the thousands to American soldiers, and the American Red Cross is providing entertainment for thousands more. Churches, chapels and cathedrals are all playing their part, for the spiritual note rings in the hearts of many. Presentation of gifts, confined in the main to needy children, occupies the attention of those GIs who remember the "Wise Men" and the gifts they gave so willingly, while packages, labelled "Do not open till Christmas," will be unwrapped in a thousand huts tonight.

If the folks at home look forward with any degree of pleasure to Christmas, they must try to imagine the joy and happiness of those men whose great good luck has brought them through many hardships and dangers and having been brushed by death, now look forward to Christmas with the certain knowledge that they have brought closer the day when reunion with loved ones at home will be an actuality. To such men the Spirit of Christmas is a living thing. Having tasted the bitterness of war, they can appreciate to the full the meaning of "Peace on Earth . . . Good will to all Men."

Santa's Everywhere

"Yes, Virginia . . . there is a Santa Claus." All of us have read those famous lines by Frank Church, who in his New York Sun editorial of September 12, 1897, described so beautifully the meaning of Christmas.

But Santa Claus is known best in America. Here in Great Britain Father Christmas takes over and customs are different. The day, however, is celebrated in many ways eminently suited to the expression of joy and merriment.

Among the English customs are those of the decoration of homes and churches, the Christmas dinner complete with boar's head and puddings, the mistletoe bough and the kissing bush, the Christmas presents and the Christmas cards, the Christmas tree and carols and games.

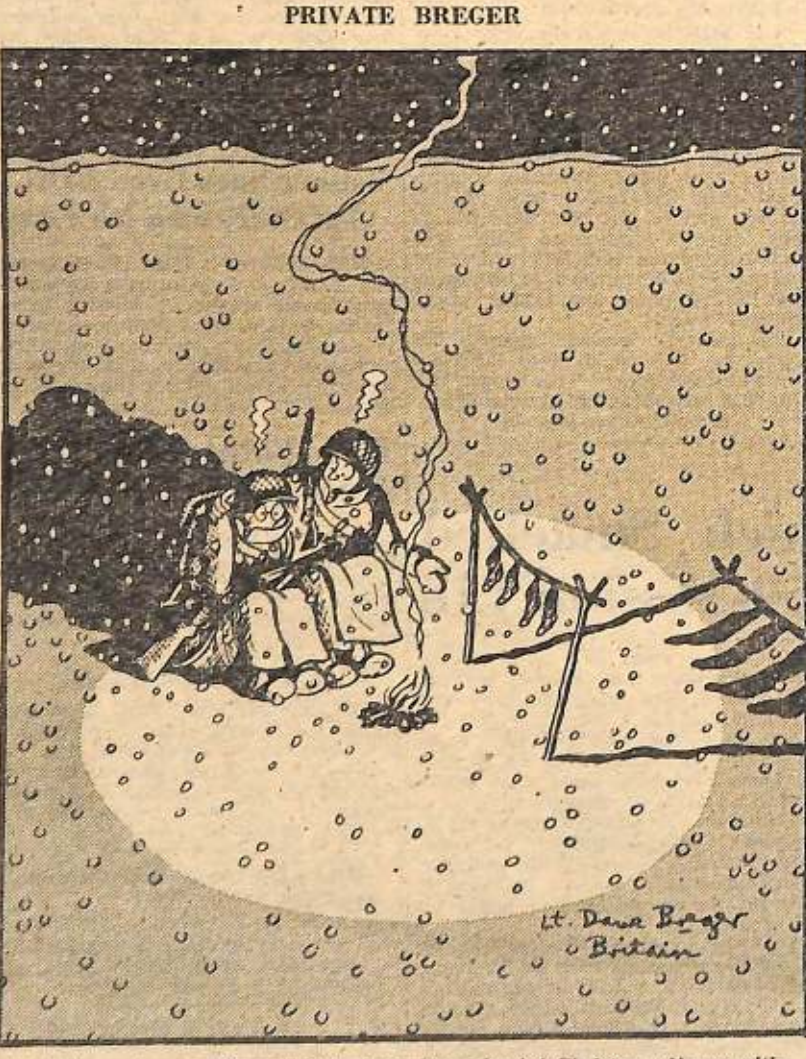
Local customs of course, vary widely and some are most unusual. In many villages for example, the custom of "lucky birds" still survives. The first boy to reach any house on Christmas morning is called a lucky bird and a small coin must be given to him or great misfortune will follow.

In Western Sussex, after the day's work is ended, farm laborers assemble in a group for the purpose of wassailing the apple trees, and this ceremony is followed by the serving of sparkling ale round the owner's kitchen fire.

In Hertfordshire the traditional time for igniting the Yule log is Christmas Eve, Dec. 24, and as the fire is lit a bit of last year's log is added to ensure happiness throughout the coming year.

St. Nicholas is the patron saint of children in many sections of Great Britain, and school children, poor maidens and sailors receive gifts from every honest citizen who desires to enjoy prosperity.

But whether it's Scotland, Wales, North Ireland or England, the spirit of St. Nicholas, Father Christmas or Santa, seems to be one and the same. Deep in the hearts of all of us we believe in the grand old man, for while "nobody sees Santa Claus, that is no sign there is no Santa Claus. The most real things in the world are those which neither children nor men can see. No Santa Claus! Thank God he lives and he lives forever." Haven't we seen him in the eyes of British children?



Well, maybe next time we'll be back home havin' Christmas dinner with our folks an' a big tree an' presents an' a fireplace . . .



### Lefty Gomez, Sharkey Arrive in N. Africa

ALGIERS, Dec. 23—Vernon "Lefty" Gomez, former major league pitcher, arrived here yesterday on a tour of camps and immediately entered the hospital for treatment of a throat infection. Gomez's condition is described as not serious. Gomez is accompanied by former heavyweight champion Jack Sharkey and Professional Golf Association tournament manager Fred Corcoran.

### Gremlins Win 2 To Pace Fliers

### Double Victory Gives Them Northern Loop Lead; Crusaders on Top

By Sid Schapiro  
Stars and Stripes Staff Writer  
— BOMBARDMENT DIVISION, Dec. 23—Trouncing the Podhs, 44-24, and the Polar Bears, 40-24, the Gremlins lead the Northern Loop here at the end of two weeks of basketball play. Sgt. Si Feely, of Shelbyville, Miss., was high Gremlin, racking up 12 points.

However, both losers got an even break. Deadlocked eight times, the Podhs edged the Kiwis, 40-38, the Polar Bears downed the Fliers, 34-15.

Pvt. Eddie Watson, of Feepert, N.Y., sank the deciding goal against the Kiwis, while Pvt. Jesse Richardson, of Livingston, Texas, was top scorer with 18 tallies for the losers. Sgt. Eddie Czarzasty, of Jersey City, N.J., and Cpl. Roy Lewis, of Rhineland, Wis., each garnered seven points for the Bears.

The Kiwis smacked the Flashes, 35-28, for their first triumph and the Rliers dropped another, 16-6, to give the Flashes their initial victory.

In the Southern loop the Crusaders are on top, nipping the Tigers, 38-34, and vanquishing the Unknowns, 32-18. Cpl. Joe Uhis, of West Frankfort, Ill., came through with 13 points against the Tigers, while Pfc Harold Coffman, of Greencastle, Ind., racked up 12 against the Unknowns.

The Bombers nosed out the Alcon-Falcons, 37-31, who did likewise to the Unknowns, 36-30. Cpl. Virgil Moit, of Muskogee, Okla., and Sgt. Larry Welborn, of South Bend, Ind., each hooped 13 tallies for the Bombers while Cpl. Dick Baldwin, of Olean, N.Y., got ten markers in both Alcon-Falcon games. The Ridges have not played as yet.

### Boxer's Death Was Accidental

CHICAGO, Dec. 23—A verdict of accidental death was returned yesterday by a coroner's jury investigating the ten-round boxing bout Monday night which proved fatal to Al Reasoner, 23-year-old Negro lightweight.

Reasoner suffered a TKO at the hands of Freddy Dawson and went down three times in the tenth round before Referee Norm Garrity stopped the fight. Reasoner never regained consciousness and died in a hospital five hours after the fight.

Testimony showed that Reasoner died of traumatic cerebral hemorrhage and suffered a fractured rib and kidney hemorrhage during the bout. Reasoner was adjudged in excellent physical condition by the Illinois Athletic Commission doctor before the fight.

### Jack, Angott Meet Jan. 28 In Non-Title Garden Bout

NEW YORK, Dec. 23—Beau Jack, the hammering lightweight from Georgia who is recognized in New York State as champion of the world, and Sammy Angott, National Boxing Association titleholder, will meet in a ten-round over-the-weight contest at Madison Square Garden here Jan. 28.

Jack originally was scheduled to take on Bobby Ruffin on Jan. 7, but will fight Lulu Costantino that night instead. Ruffin withdrew from the fight when his manager and Jack's failed to come to terms.

### Hockey League Standings

Team	W	L	T	Pts.	Team	W	L	T	Pts.
Montreal	13	2	3	29	Chicago	10	9	0	20
Toronto	10	9	2	22	Detroit	6	8	3	15
Boston	9	8	3	21	New York	2	14	1	5

# War Ends Rice's Brilliant Career

## Feels He'll Never Regain Old Form

NEW YORK, Dec. 23—With the approach of the indoor track season comes the announcement that one of the great track men of history will run no more. Ensign Joseph Gregory Rice, of the Maritime Service, the little round man from Notre Dame who has been breaking foot racing records since 1938, is through at the age of 27.

The man who overcame a physical disability that barred him from the Army, Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard only to run able-bodied men into the ground over long distances, feels that he can never regain the condition that made him the terror of the cinders and the boards.

Rice was told by service doctors that a hernia, which bothered him not in the least while he was running, precluded enlistment. After being turned down four times he was accepted with the rank of chief specialist in the Maritime Service physical education program and assigned to the Merchant Marine Academy which had formerly been the estate of Walter P. Chrysler at Kings Point in Great Neck, Long Island, N.Y.

### America's Best

When Gunder Haegg visited this country, Rice, as America's best distance runner, was called upon to race him at 5,000 meters. Rice took his track togs out once more and visited the Great Neck High School track religiously in an attempt to get into shape. The rigorous routine at the academy was not the kind



Greg Rice

of training a runner needs. Rice knew he was licked before he started that sultry June evening in the Randall's Island Stadium beneath the Tri-

## Rejected by Doctors, Now in Maritime Service

Borough Bridge. He knew his streak of 65 consecutive victories was finished, but he walked out and bravely took a shellacking like many he had dished out. Rice was puffing along 50 yards in the rear when the Swede ran across the finish line, and if that was his last race, he can be just as proud of it as the many he had won. He can hang up his shoes with the proud knowledge that he tried just as gallantly in defeat as he ever had in victory.

### No Facilities Available

"I made up my mind after Haegg beat me that I would never run again unless I was in top shape," Rice said. "There are no facilities for training at the academy, so I won't run indoors this year. I am 27 now, and if I have to remain idle another year, I am afraid I can never regain the condition that it took me five years to reach."

Rice, inclined to gain weight, had trouble as a college student in keeping his weight down. Johnny Nicholson, Notre Dame cross-country coach, asked Rice in 1935 whether he intended to run or have somebody roll him. It took Rice a long time to get down to running trim then and he was eight years younger than he is now.

Even if the Missoula, Mont., express never runs again, track fans will always thrill to the memory of the thundering finishing kick he had. Near the end of a race Rice uncorked his last-minute drive when his only opponent was the clock, his rival runners having been left far behind and often lapped.

## Hawks Subdue Red Wings, 7-1

CHICAGO, Dec. 23—The Chicago Black Hawks ended a three-game losing streak by holding the Detroit Red Wings scoreless until the last four minutes and winning, 7-1, here last night.

The first two periods were tame enough with Si Seibert tallying for the Hawks in the first and Vic Hallyger in the second. Doug Bentley netted the first Chicago goal in the final frame within three minutes. Shortly afterwards the crowd's eyes popped out as Clint Smith, Jack Dye and Cully Dahlstrom scored within a minute and one-half.

Don Grosso, assisted by Joe Carveth and Adam Brown, averted a shutout for the Wings, but the Hawks had the last word when Bentley went in with three minutes remaining.

## Kerr Gloomy About Squad

SAN FRANCISCO, Dec. 23—Andy Kerr, coach of the Eastern Collegiate All-Stars, says that this year's Eastern team is "probably among the worst" in 17 years of the East-West games.

Kerr explained it was difficult to round up a team of 24 good men due to military orders and travel restrictions.

While the entire Eastern team is composed of civilians, Coach Babe Hollingberry, boss of the Western squad, has plenty of tough soldiers including five from March Field's Fourth Air Force aggregation. The West's line averages 215 pounds.

## Arkansas Pledged Chance To Ban Horse, Dog Racing

LITTLE ROCK, Ark., Dec. 23—Gov. Homer M. Adkins has announced that he would see to it that petitions are circulated to place on the 1944 general election ballot an act which would outlaw horse and dog racing in Arkansas.

About 6,000 signatures are needed to put the act on the ballot for a vote.

### Basketball Results

Camp Edwards 47, Tufts 38
Great Lakes 45, DePaul 26
Oklahoma Aggies 39, Enid Flying School 29
Ozarkwa Naval 55, Drake 24
Princeton 51, Rider 33
St. John's 80, Webb Institute 32
Temple 41, Franklin and Marshall 41

## Rudy York Batted Across 118 Runs in '43 to Lead AL

CHICAGO, Dec. 23—Rudy York, Detroit Tiger first baseman, was the American League's chief artillery man with 118 runs batted in and 34 homers for the season, leading the league in both departments, according to the official averages released yesterday.

York warmed up with the weather reaching its hottest point in August with 17 homers and 45 runs batted in.

Nick Etten, Yankee first baseman, with 107 runs batted in, was the only other man in the league with more than 100. When Ted Williams, of the Red Sox, led the league with 137 in 1942, five men knocked in more than 100.

Billy Johnson, Yankee third baseman, was third with 94, followed by Vern Stephens, of St. Louis, with 91 and Stan Spence, of Washington, with 88.

Charlie Keller, another Yankee, led the league in walks with 106 and team mate Joe Gordon was second with 88. Mickey Vernon was hit by the pitcher ten times, leading that department.

Leather medals were awarded to Chet Laabs, of St. Louis, for the most strikeouts, 105, and Jimmy Bloodworth, of Detroit, who set a new record of hitting into 129 double plays. Tony Lupien also set a new mark, hitting into only three double plays in 154 games.

Bloodworth helped the Tigers set a new league record by hitting into 159 double plays and Cleveland set a new low record for the same department with 54.

## Anderson to Use Nagurski To Crack Washington Line

CHICAGO, Dec. 23—Hunk Anderson, Chicago Bear coach, is counting on old war horse Bronko Nagurski to bust up the Washington Redskins line Sunday. Nagurski, playing fullback for the first time in five years, averaged 5.2 yards a crack against the Cardinals on Nov. 28.

"If the Redskins spread out to defend against Sid Luckman, we will send Nagurski through the line," Anderson said. "And if they bunch up to stop Nagurski, we will send Harry Clark and Dante Magnani around the ends or have Luckman pass."

## Bradford Rejoins Pony Loop

BRADFORD, Pa., Dec. 23—The Bradford baseball club re-enters the Pony League next year under the sponsorship of the Philadelphia Phillies, according to a deal consummated Sunday. Bradford was a charter member of the league organized in 1939 but dropped out at the start of the 1943 season when the Boston Braves withdrew their support.

## Greatest Sports Comeback Made By Oldster Stagg

NEW YORK, Dec. 23—The year-end splurge of polls continues on its merry way with Amos Alonzo Stagg receiving his second award within a month as the Associated Press named him as the person who made the greatest comeback in sports in 1943.

Despite the fact that only sports were considered, Tommy Harmon drew plenty of votes for returning twice after being lost on aerial missions.

Patty Berg, woman golfer who came back after 18 months' inactivity due to a Texas automobile accident to win the Western Women's Open, ran second to Stagg.

Stagg's College of the Pacific football team, bolstered by Marine and Naval trainees, went through the first part of the season undefeated before losing to Southern California in a game whose result remains a subject of debate on the Pacific Coast.

The first ten in the poll were:

Stagg, football; Patty Berg, golf; Bronko Nagurski, football; New York Yankees, baseball; Luke Appling, baseball; Beau Jack, boxing; Schoolboy Rowe, baseball; New York Giants, football; Joe Gordon, baseball, and Henry Armstrong, boxing.

## Alcon-Falcon Soccer Team Draws With RAF Hawks

— BOMBER STATION, Dec. 23—The Bombardment Division soccer champion Alcon-Falcons played a 3-3 tie with the RAF Hawks here yesterday. Several weeks ago the Hawks topped the Falcons, 9-3.

Sgt. Joe Towell, of Pittsburgh, netted two goals and Pfc Jim Ferreria, of White Plains, N.Y., booted the final tally for the Falcons.

NEW YORK, Dec. 23—When Notre Dame dropped out of the undefeated class it was only 24 seconds away from victory. That's how long the game had to run when Steve Lach, of Great Lakes, threw one of the longest passes on collegiate records, 54 yards from the line of scrimmage, and there went the Irish's national championships.

Hammerin' Hank Armstrong is again coming out of retirement, but this time only for one fight. The only man to hold three titles at one time, Hank will battle on an Infantile Paralysis Fund card in Portland, Oregon. . . . When Navy battered Army, 13-0, it was the first time in the history of the rivalry that one club has won five straight. . . . Little Teddy Atkinson, the East's leading jockey, is so popular at Rockingham, where he started his riding career, that they had a special Teddy Atkinson Day, and the feature race was named the Teddy Atkinson purse. Teddy served as honorary steward for the program.

Buckeye Victory Disputed  
Len Pruski was a middle distance star when he attended Marquette, but he always wanted to run longer distances. Thus it was no surprise to Hilltoppers when they learned that Pruski, now in the Naval Air Forces, has made 22 Pacific crossing flights. . . . Recently Ohio State and Illinois played a game that apparently ended as a 26-26 tie. Then after the fans had left and the players were in the showers, the officials called both teams back, saying Illinois had been offside on the last play. Ohio State's Stungis kicked a field goal and that was the ball game. Only a radio broadcaster's account of the game said that before making the kick Stungis threw his headgear off the field. If that is the case Illinois hasn't been beaten yet, as a rule in the conference says that "all players shall wear a headgear on every play," so the kick wouldn't be legal.

When Michigan rolled over Ohio State, 45-7, it brought its points total for the year to 302 and became the highest scoring squad that Fritz Crisler has coached in his 14 years at Michigan, Princeton and Minnesota. . . . According to some of the guys who should know, Eddie Prokop of Georgia Tech and not Angelo Bertelli is the best back of the year. The authority for that? Capt. Billy Whelchel and Lt. Cmdr. Rip Miller of the Navy. They both say that Prokop is the finest all-around back in the nation and will be number one in the pro draft which, after all, is one of the best ways to judge a back's ability.

'Tallest Team in World'  
Valparaiso University is expecting to take the "Tallest Team in the World" title away from the West Texas Buffaloes this season with a starting five that averages six-foot-five. Two of the boys, Don Warneke and Milt Schoon, are six-foot-ten and six-foot-nine-and-a-half respectively. . . . Washington U. of St. Louis now has its entire coaching staff in the Navy; Head Coach Tom Gorman is at Chapel Hill, N.C. and Bud Kerr and Andy Pilney are at Georgia Pre-Flight. . . . St. Louis U. will get back into intercollegiate athletics with a basketball team this year, although its search for a coach hasn't borne any fruit as yet.

The latest rule to curb the use of the "freak" tall boys is being advanced by George Edwards of Missouri. George says that instead of moving the goals higher they should make a rule that prohibits the touching of the ball in its downward flight. That would stop some of the men-mountains from reaching up and dipping shots out of the basket. . . . Following a discussion in Chicago as to who would make up the fastest backfield ever seen on the gridiron, Francis Powers in the Chicago Daily News picked the entire old backfield of the Canton Bulldogs of pro fame 20 years ago. His nominees were Jim Thorpe, Joe Guyon, Pete Calac and Cecil Griggs. The first three were Indians and all well under ten-second men, while Griggs was the fastest of the lot in near-record time.

## Help Wanted —AND GIVEN

Write your question or problem to Help Wanted, Stars and Stripes, Printing House Sq., London, EC4.

APOs Wanted  
Cpl. Arthur G. Chappell, Merichian, Miss.; Harold Red Cohen, Bronx; Sgt. Fred Dawson, Dallas, Tex.; Bruce R. Davis, Santa Barbara, Cal.; S/Sgt. Danny Green, Rock Island, Ill.; Sgt. Tom Lee, Cal.; Kenneth Perry, La Harpe, Ill.; Cpl. Robert Scott, Joplin, Miss.; Ben Wayne, Cedar Grove, N.J.; Pvt. Eddie White, Ft. Geo. Kinney, McKeesport, Pa.

Wanted  
TYPEWRITER, portable in good condition.—Pvt. Robert B. Buford, c/o Help Wanted.  
RAZOR, Remington electric, late model in good condition.—Pvt. Robert B. Buford, c/o Help Wanted.

Wanted  
TYPEWRITER, Hermes, portable (made in Switzerland); will pay good price.—Lt. David Lewis, care of Help Wanted.

Lost  
WALLET containing cash, personal papers, etc.—Lt. Harry C. White, care of Help Wanted.  
IDENTIFICATION bracelet with name and serial number on it. "Liquid" reward for its return.—Col. Eric T. Bradley, O-128231, c/o Help Wanted.

Found  
RING, in London Red Cross washroom on Dec. 16, date 1940 or 1906, initials "L.H.-S.H."—Sgt. Griffith E. Harris, c/o Help Wanted.  
IDENTIFICATION bracelet lost in London, has ASN and inscription "Love Becky."—Sgt. Lewis H. Hull, 15082508, c/o Help Wanted.

Found  
PACKAGE addressed to 2/Lt. William Gross from Lorraine Kulawa of Pittsburgh, Pa., misdirected to me. Will forward upon receipt of correct address.—Lt. William H. Gross, c/o Help Wanted

LILABNER  
—NOW WE'LL RE-ENACT THE CRIME!— THE BOUNCING BALDWIN'S ARE ALL SET. WHEN THE GUN IS FIRED, A DOZEN OF US, INCLUDING ME, WILL JUMP FROM UP HERE, LANDING SHACK ON YOUR FACE! THEN WE'LL REMOVE THE BLINDFOLD AND I DEFEY YOU, YOKUM, TO PICK OUT WHICH ONE IS ME!!

THAT TOBACCO SMOKE—I'M FAINTING!!

IT'S THE RIGHT ONE!! THE REAL CRIM'NUL

# RAF Again Hits The Possible Site Of Rocket Guns

## Blow by Mediums Follows Heavies' Raid; Results of U.S. Attack Detailed

RAF bombers yesterday made their second attack in two days on the northern French coast, which may be the site of Hitler's reprisal rocket guns.

The raid yesterday, carried out by RAF medium bombers, followed the first officially disclosed blow by RAF heavy bombers against military objectives, unspecified, in northern France, carried out Wednesday night.

Meanwhile, the Eighth Air Force announced results of the sixth assault of the month on Germany by American heavy bombers Wednesday.

### 21 U.S. Bombers Lost

In the American mission, described in the communique only as an attack on targets in northwest Germany, 38 enemy planes were destroyed, 15 by escorting Thunderbolts and Lightnings and 23 by the heavy bombers. Twenty-one bombers and four fighters did not return.

Enemy opposition reported by bomber crewmen varied. The German fighters concentrated heavy attacks on some of the Fortress and Liberator formations, while others had little or no contact with the enemy.

Bearing out the testimony of other airmen that the targets were well covered with bombs, Lt. Col. Conway S. Hill, a Fortress combat wing commander from North Little Rock, Ark., said:

"The large number of bombers over the target area at the same time was impressive. There was quite a bit of flak, but it didn't touch us. We had a bomb run which was plenty long, plenty straight and plenty level. Our bombardier had plenty of time to get set."

### Berlin Damage Detailed

As the USAAF returned from its seventh operation of the month, the Air Ministry, in the first official report on the six RAF raids on Berlin since Nov. 18, revealed that at least 70 great factories and government buildings and other important structures had been damaged.

Interpretations of the report, which described Berlin as even more battered than Hamburg, said that from 40 to 50 per cent of the German capital had been blitzed.

# Wrights' Plane Is Going Home

The Wright airplane, first power-driven aircraft to make a successful flight, is to return to the Smithsonian Institute after 18 years at the South Kensington Museum in London.

This was announced by President Roosevelt in an address, read in his absence, at a dinner commemorating the 40th anniversary of the initial airborne venture by the Wright Brothers, Orville and Wilbur.

On Dec. 17, 1903, Orville Wright made the first trip, one of 120 feet, and later Wilbur took the 12 hp plane over 859 feet, at Kitty Hawk, N.C. The airplane was placed in the Smithsonian Institute, but in 1925 a dispute arose between Orville Wright and the secretary of the Institute, Dr. Charles Walcott, Wright claiming that proper credit was not being given to his craft as the first successful flying machine.

Since that date it has been on view in London. The President's announcement was the first indication that the 18-year-old breach had been healed.

Gen. Henry H. Arnold, USAAF commander, received the Collier Trophy at the dinner from the hands of Orville Wright, at the request of the President as "an additional tribute," to the General. The trophy has been awarded annually since 1911 for the greatest achievement in aviation in America.

# Pennsylvania to Continue The Rationing of Whisky

HARRISBURG, Pa., Dec. 23—The State Liquor Control Board announced that whisky rationing which was tried as an experiment in this state beginning last November will be continued when the trial period ends Dec. 31.

The ration for Pennsylvanians now is a fifth and a pint per person each month. The amount each person will be able to buy after next year has not been announced.

# Russia - - -

(Continued from page 1)

sive southwest of Zhlobin with two groups of 100 tanks each, strongly supported with infantry. At least six tank divisions were thrown into the attack, the paper said.

The Russians said the counter-attacks here, as well as others in the Kirovograd and Korosten areas, cost the Germans extremely high losses in men and armor.

On most parts of the front, lakes, rivers and swamps are now frozen, and blizzards blanket the country with deep snow. In spite of this, Moscow said, Russian planes were giving considerable support to front-line troops.

# Any Similarity to KPs Is Purely Coincidental

FORT MONMOUTH, N.J., Dec. 23—U.S. spudroopers are being brought up to date on the newer, finer points of potato peeling by a new Army film entitled "Nomenclature, Care and Peeling of the Potato—Unmounted," now being distributed at home and overseas.

The film explains that "men engaged in hand-to-hand combat with the potato are carefully chosen for their alertness and attention to duty."

"The first cut is important," according to the film track, "and must follow the grain along the barrel assembly if the peel is to be disassembled properly."

# Aussies Racing Toward Madang Supply Base Is Captured; Sixth Army Advances On New Britain

ALLIED HQ, Southwest Pacific, Dec. 23—Australian troops, speeding their drive for the important port of Madang, 100 miles up the coast of the Huon peninsula, sized the former Japanese supply center of Hubika yesterday, after little Jap resistance.

The enemy troops are reported to be disorganized. Their food supplies are said to be very short.

On New Britain the Sixth Army advanced slowly from the Arawe peninsula, and so far little real resistance has been met. Japanese dive-bombers, however, attacked the U.S. troops three times while consolidating their newly won positions. U.S. fighters intercepted and shot down 12 dive-bombers and four fighters.

A Japanese troopship and a 6,000-ton cargo ship were sunk by bombers off Kavieng, in New Ireland, north of New Britain.

### Libs Hit Town in Siam

CHUNGKING, Dec. 23 (AP)—China-based Liberators made a "highly successful" raid on Siam on Dec. 21, bombing railway yards at Chiengrai and starting many large fires, it was announced today.

Mitchell's attacked Hwajung, one of the principal bases in the Tungting lake area, while U.S. fighters supporting Chinese troops on the Salween front strafed a Japanese landing-strip in northern Burma. All U.S. aircraft returned safely.

# Men Conditioned for Army Service in Warm Climates

CHICAGO, Dec. 23—The Journal of the American Medical Association reported successful tests to condition men for exertion in hot climates through a comparatively few short daily exposures in an artificially heated room. The experiments were conducted by five men dressed in standard Army summer clothing.

They walked on a moving treadmill from one to one and a half hours a day in a room in which desert conditions were simulated. The walks continued through 23 days. The Journal recorded that 80 per cent of the total improvement occurred during the first week.

# U.S. Shipyards to Revert To 6-Day Working Week

WASHINGTON, Dec. 23 (UP)—Rear Adm. Howard L. Vickery, vice-chairman of the Maritime Commission, has ordered all shipyards to revert to a six-day working week after Jan. 1, it has been announced. The seven-day week will be maintained only in yards engaged in the urgent production of a certain type of vessel.

# Escaped Convict Is Caught After 16 Years of Freedom

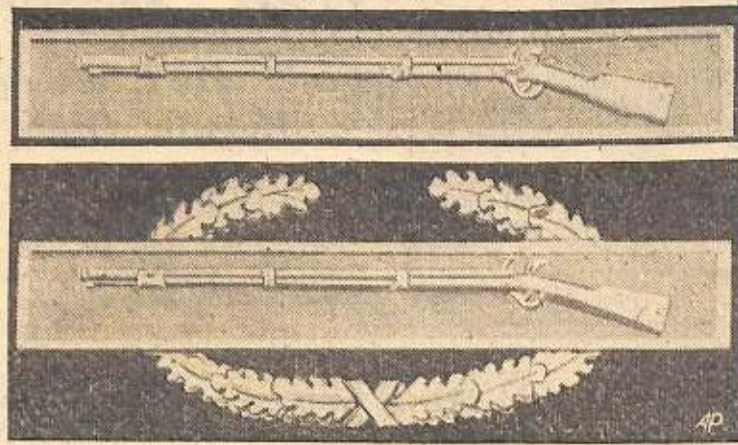
ALDERSON, W. Va., Dec. 23—John Siegers, who escaped from a prison road camp here 16 years ago, is being returned after his arrest in Orlando, Fla., by the Miami FBI office.

The FBI said Siegers has been living in Orlando under the name of Theodore Harry Lyons. He had been sentenced to a three-year term for white slavery in 1927.

# Terry and the Pirates



# New Infantry Badges



Infantrymen are getting their share of glory with these two new badges announced by the War Department. Expert Infantry badge at top will be awarded to infantrymen who achieve "a stipulated standard of proficiency." Combat Infantryman's award below will go to men whose combat conduct is "exemplary, or whose combat action occurs in a major operation."

# A Tip For Christmas

A tip to any American soldiers still searching for someone who needs cheering up on Christmas Day:

In Middlesex Hospital, Mortimer St., London, W1, a 21-year-old British girl, Betty Lewis, is convalescing from a broken back suffered six months ago when she was in an automobile accident involving an American soldier, who was killed in the crash.

Cpl. Paul Feig, of Newark, N.J., heard about the girl through a friend and drops in occasionally with a pack of cigarettes or a bar of candy. He passed the word on in the belief others might remember the girl at Christmas.

# Christmas - -

(Continued from page 1)

sive in every theater. Final victory is no longer uncertain."

Late information yesterday indicated that Americans throughout the ETO would entertain three times the number of English children which an early estimate had placed at 25,000.

Among the largest entertainments are a single party for 5,000 Ulster children, given yesterday in Belfast by American technicians of the Lockheed Overseas Corp.; a series of 40 parties for approximately 10,000 children being given by a large infantry unit, and a single party for 500 children, to be given today by soldiers at Eighth Air Force Special Service headquarters.

Religious services—most of them in the form of midnight masses and candlelight services Christmas Eve, communion and carol-singing Christmas morning—will be held at all American camps, airfields and supply depots, under the leadership of Army chaplains. In response to an invitation from the British clergy, many Americans will kneel beside the people of Britain in their cathedrals and village churches.

Radio broadcasts to the folks back home, parties for English children and Christmas meals in American Red Cross clubs are among other celebrations in which ETO soldiers will take part over the holiday.

Five thousand Ulster children attended a Christmas party given in Belfast yesterday by American technicians of the Lockheed Overseas Corporation. Seven halls were required for the party.

Seventy-five members of an infantry division and a bombardment group will broadcast an hour program to their families in Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia.

Several leaders of the Ploesti raid will be on an all-Liberator program to be relayed home by radio Christmas Day. A holiday program at a Thunderbolt station will send to their Massachusetts homes the voices of Pfc Michael Doyle and Pvt. Joseph A. Ottaviani.

Five hundred English youngsters from near by communities will be entertained by soldiers at Eighth Air Force Special Service headquarters today. On Christmas Eve headquarters' personnel of a fighter station will give a party for 200 children. ETO headquarters company will help Peter C., a Stars and Stripes War Orphan, celebrate Christmas.

Billy Gilbert, rotund, Hollywood comedian, and star of the USO-Camp Show "Hullabaloo," will play Santa at a party scheduled by soldiers for 150 orphans at Northampton. Highlight will be the distribution by the men of toys made by themselves.

# Vast War Tolls Loom, U.S. Told

## Official Predicts 500,000 American Troops Will Fall in Next 90 Days

WASHINGTON, Dec. 23—A warning that American war casualties in the next 90 days would total 500,000 was given last night by a high Government official who refused to allow the use of his name.

Although he did not reveal under what conditions the armed forces would receive such tremendous casualties, it was understood his prophecy was based on plans for a major invasion of Europe and perhaps additional Pacific assaults.

Expressing concern at the complacent attitude toward the war on the home front, the civilian official estimated that half a million Americans would be killed, captured or wounded in the next three months as a gauge of the battle facing the nation before victory is achieved.

Asked to comment on the prediction, Elmer Davis, director of the Office of War Information, said: "Only God knows what American battle casualties will be in the next 90 days or any other time."

No comment on the unofficial prediction was made by either the War or Navy Departments. Elsewhere in Capital circles, however, it was intimated that a cross-Channel invasion would not be launched until spring at the earliest.

The official's warning, however, coincided with a campaign to drive home the horrors of war to the American public. In the next few weeks such things as pictures of the bloody landing at Tarawa, in the Pacific Gilberts, will be shown to paint brutally what war means to men at the front.

# 14th Air Force Beat Japs 9-1 in 13 Months Struggle

WASHINGTON, Dec. 23—A nine-to-one victory in air battles with the Japs over a 13-month period has been scored by the 14th Air Force in China, Maj. Gen. Claire Chennault declared in an issue of The Army and Navy Journal.

"During 13 months of combat," wrote Gen. Chennault, "we have destroyed 122 confirmed enemy planes in the air, 204 probables, and smashed 123 planes on the ground. Our combat losses have been 54 planes."

Meanwhile, from Calcutta came the report that the Japanese used a new type of fighter known as Zero I, to cover their twin-engined bombers in their raid on Calcutta a week ago—the first of the war.

# FDR Offers to Mediate Rail Row to Avert Strike

WASHINGTON, Dec. 23 (AP)—President Roosevelt today offered to mediate the wage dispute between the managements and the five operating railroad brotherhoods if they promised to abide by his decision.

"The war cannot wait," the President told both sides, when they reported their inability to reach a decision.

The disputants immediately called meetings to decide whether to accept the President's offer.

# Another Turkey 'Quake

ANKARA, Dec. 23 (AP)—An Istanbul newspaper reported a new earthquake, unconfirmed by any other source. According to the newspaper, the earthquake killed 550 people and ruined two towns in the Erbaa region on Dec. 6.

# NEWS FROM HOME Dollar Is King For Bounteous U.S. Christmas

## War Workers, Troops Go On a Buying Spree That Makes Santa a Piker

NEW YORK, Dec. 23—There's only one more shopping day 'till Christmas and it appears that the Yule celebration will be about the same this year, with soldiers' and war workers' pockets full of money and stores still full of plenty of the things they want to buy.

A nation-wide survey showed today that sales throughout the nation already had risen 25 per cent above last year's record holiday purchases.

Anyone walking down Fifth Ave. could buy a fur coat, suit, perfume, or most any luxury. Most meat markets still had turkeys, chickens, beef or pork roasts to sell. Liquor stores have felt the pinch a little bit, however, with rye, scotch and bourbon almost unobtainable—but they still had quantities of rum, gin and Cuban wines.

One jeweler said that gifts priced at between \$500 and \$1,000 were the best sellers. Stores were advising customers "to buy now" and avoid expected price increase.

Some of the heaviest buyers were war workers coming from industrial areas near by.

# 'Good Old Days' are Gone

NEW YORK, Dec. 23 (UP)—Six men, alleged to be survivors of the old Capone gang, together with Louis Kaufman, a New Jersey labor leader, were found guilty yesterday by a Federal jury here of conspiracy to extort \$1,000,000 from the movie industry.

# Willow Run Strike Ends

DETROIT, Dec. 23 (UP)—A foremen's strike which was crippling production at the Ford Willow Run plant has ended. The Foremen's Association has ordered the 900 foremen involved to return to work.

# Long Run About Over

ATLANTA, Ga., Dec. 23—A pardon for Robert Elliott Burns, author of "I'm a Fugitive from a Georgia Chain Gang," has been recommended by Gov. Ellis Arnall, according to a story in the Atlanta Constitution.

# They Don't Fool Here

STONEHAM, Mass., Dec. 23—Citizens here held their town meeting in record time. In two minutes the meeting was called to order, voted to continue a ten per cent pay increase for public employees and adjourned.

# Life Follows Death

SCHENECTADY, N.Y., Dec. 23—Two days after she was notified officially by the War Department of the death of her husband in a train wreck at Rennett, N.C., Mrs. Louis P. Mach gave birth to a boy.

# EM Jews Plan Orphans' Party

Jewish soldiers in the ETO will give a party for 120 Jewish orphans Sunday, as part of the eight-day festival of Hanukkah.

Sponsors of the party, in charge of Chaplain Judah Nadich, include Sgt. William Schifter, New York; Pvt. Jean Wachtel, Kew Gardens, N.Y.; Cpl. Samuel Schechter, Brooklyn; Lt. Charles E. Simon, Cleveland, and Lt. Sheldon Rotenberg, Boston.

A special military service for Jewish troops of the United Nations will be held Sunday at the Bevis Marks Synagogue in London.

Other Hanukkah services for London troops will be held Monday at 1 Green St., and Tuesday at Bower Street Barracks.

# New Super Bomber to Hit Japs Developed in U.S.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 23—Development of a new super-bomber which would "surprise and hurt" the enemy was revealed after a 10,000-mile tour of aircraft factories and USAAF bases by Rep. John J. Sparkman, chairman of the House Aviation Committee.

He said the plane probably would be used extensively in the Pacific because of its long-range flying ability.

# By Milton Caniff

