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By the men . . for the men in the service

"The Last Full Measure of Devotion" —VICTORY IN EUROPE, MAY 8, 1945

ON THE EVE OF V-E DAY IN PICCADILLY

The Messages, Here and at Home, Proclaiming the End of the War in Europe

President Truman

THIS is a solemn but glorious hour.

My only wish is that Franklin D. Roosevelt had lived to witness this day. Gen. Eisenhower informs me that the forces of Germany have surrendered to the United Nations. The flags of freedom fly all over Europe.

In this victory we join in offering our thanks to the Providence which has guided and sustained us through the dark days of our adversity.

Our rejoicing is sober and subdued by the supreme consciousness of the terrible price we have paid to rid the world of Hitler and his evil band.

Let us not forget, my fellow-Americans, the sorrow and heartbreak which today abide in the homes of so many of our neighbors—neighbors whose most priceless possession has been rendered as a sacrifice to redeem our liberty.

We can repay the debt which we owe to our God, to our dead, and to our children only by work—by ceaseless devotion to the responsibilities which lie ahead of us.

If I could give you a single watchword for the coming months that word is—work, work, work. We must work to finish the war. Our victory is but half won. The West is free but the East is still in bondage to the treacherous tyranny of the Japanese.

When the last Japanese division has surrendered unconditionally, then only will our fighting job be done. We must work to bind up the wounds of the suffering world—to build an abiding peace, a peace rooted in justice and in law.

We can build such a peace only by hard, toilsome, painstaking work—by understanding and working with our Allies in peace as we have in war.

The job ahead is no less important, no less urgent, no less difficult than the task which now is happily done.

I call upon every American to stick to his post until the last battle is won. Until that day, let no man abandon his post or slacken his efforts.

And now I want to read to you my formal proclamation on this occasion:

The Allied armies, through sacrifice and devotion and with God's help, have won from Germany a final and unconditional surrender. The western world has been freed of the evil forces which for five years and longer have imprisoned the bodies and broken the lives of millions upon millions of freeborn men. They have violated their churches, destroyed their homes, corrupted their children and murdered their loved ones. Our armies of liberation have restored freedom to these suffering peoples whose spirit and will the oppressor could never enslave.

Much remains to be done. The victory won in the West must now be won in the East. The whole world must be cleansed of the evil from which half of the world has been freed. United, the peace-loving nations have demonstrated in the West that their arms are stronger by far than the might of dictators or the tyranny of military cliques that once called us soft and weak. The power of our peoples to defend themselves against all enemies will be proved in the Pacific as it has been proved in Europe. For the triumph of spirit and of arms which we have won and for its promise to the peoples everywhere who join us in love of freedom, it is fitting that we as a nation give thanks to Almighty God who has strengthened us and given us the victory.

Now, therefore, I, Harry S. Truman, President of the United States of America, do hereby appoint Sunday, May 13, 1945, to be a day of prayer.

I call upon all the people of the United States, whatever their faith, to unite in offering joyful thanks to God for the victory we have won and to pray that He will support us to the end of our struggle and guide us into the way of peace.

I also call upon my countrymen to dedicate this day of prayer to the memory of those who have given their lives to make possible our victory.

Prime Minister Churchill

YESTERDAY morning at 2:41 a.m. at Gen. Eisenhower's Headquarters, Gen. Jodl, representative of the German High Command and of Grand Admiral Doenitz, the designated head of the German State, signed an act of unconditional surrender of all German land, sea and air forces in Europe to the Allied Expeditionary Forces and simultaneously to the Soviet High Command.

Gen. Bedell Smith, chief of staff of the Allied Expeditionary Forces, and Gen. François Sevez signed the document on behalf of the Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Forces, and Gen. Suslaparov signed on behalf of the Russian High Command.

Today this agreement will be ratified and confirmed at Berlin, where Air Chief Marshal Tedder, Deputy Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Forces, and Gen. de Tassigny will sign on behalf of Gen. Eisenhower. Marshal Zhukov will sign on behalf of the Soviet High Command. The German representatives will be Field Marshal Keitel, Chief of the High Command, and the Commanders-in-Chief of the German Army, Navy and Air Forces.

Hostilities will end officially at one minute after midnight tonight, Tuesday, the 8th of May, but in the interests of saving lives the cease-fire began yesterday, to be sounded all along the front, and our dear Channel Islands are also to be freed today.

The Germans are still in places resisting the Russian troops, but should they continue to do so after midnight they will, of course, deprive themselves of the protection of the laws of war, and will be attacked from all quarters by the Allied troops.

It is not surprising that on such long fronts and in the existing disorder of the enemy the commands of the German High Command should not, in every case, be obeyed immediately. This does not, in our opinion, with the best military advice at our disposal, constitute any reason for withholding from the nation the facts communicated to us by Gen. Eisenhower of the unconditional surrender already signed at Rheims, nor should it prevent us from celebrating today and tomorrow as Victory in Europe Days.

Today, perhaps, we shall think mostly of ourselves. Tomorrow we shall pay a particular tribute to our heroic Russian comrades whose prowess in the field has been one of the grand contributions to the general victory.

The German war is therefore at an end.

After years of intense preparation, Germany hurled herself on Poland at the beginning of September, 1939, and in pursuance of our guarantee to Poland and in agreement with the French Republic, Great Britain, the British Empire and Commonwealth of Nations declared war upon this foul aggression.

After gallant France had been struck down, we from this island and from our united Empire maintained the struggle single-handed for a whole year until we were joined by the military might of Soviet Russia and later by the overwhelming power and resources of the United States of America.

Finally, almost the whole world was combined against the evildoers who are now prostrate before us. Our gratitude to our splendid Allies goes forth from all our hearts in this island and throughout the British Empire.

We may allow ourselves a brief period of rejoicing, but let us not forget for a moment the toil and efforts that lie ahead.

Japan, with all her treachery and greed, remains unsubdued. The injuries she has inflicted on Great Britain, the United States and other countries, and her detestable cruelties call for justice and retribution.

We must now devote all our strength and resources to the completion of our task both at home and abroad.

Advance, Britannia! Long live the cause of freedom! God save the King!

CELEBRATING LONDON GIs COULDN'T FORGET JAPAN

LONDON—This city, with the help of thousands of U.S. and Allied servicemen, blew its collective top on the night before V-E Day. The signal for rejoicing came in a BBC flash which interrupted a Home Service radio program at 1940 to announce that Tuesday, May 8, would "be treated as Victory in Europe Day."

Hundreds of GIs were gathered in the Rainbow Corner Red Cross Club at Piccadilly when bundles of *Stars and Stripes* were tossed out free. The paper, a V-E Extra, bore the huge banner headline: "Germany Quits."

Rainbow Center quickly became the focal point of the excitement. A GI band which had been playing for a dance at the club moved out to the balcony and serenaded the mixed Allied crowd milling around on Shaftesbury Avenue. Although it was almost impossible to move, jitterbugs and oldsters took the cue and danced as long as there was music.

Hawkers who had somehow obtained stocks of American, British and Russian flags did a terrific business and the price of flags shot up from $1.50 to $4.00 in the space of an hour.

There was a serious note underlying all the merry-making, though, as far as the GIs were concerned—and that was the war with Japan. Otto Pollock of Ames, Ia., Rainbow associate director, put it this way: "Sure, the soldiers are happy it's all over in Europe because they've looked forward to V-E Day for a long time. But I've noticed that a great many of the GIs just sat around the Club and read the news without much emotion. They did a lot of talking about Japan and the fact that they're not celebrating V-E Day at home."

Some of the soldiers displayed the greatest enthusiasm of the evening when a sign was hoisted in the Club reading: "Upon official notice of V-E Day, all Army passes or furloughs are to be extended 48 hours irrespective of expiration date."

Here are some on-the-spot reactions of GIs:

Pvt. Robert M. Hadnott, 34, of Washington, D.C., who landed in France on D-plus-6 as a rifleman with the 9th Division, was wounded, hospitalized and then reclassified as a medic: "This is the day I've been waiting for and I feel good. I figure Germany was our toughest enemy, but Japan will take from eight to ten months because of the distances involved. I don't figure I'll get out of the Army right away, but I don't care as long as I can get home to see my wife and kid for a while. My wife wrote and said she didn't expect me right home after V-E Day, though."

T/4 Donald R. Schofield, 24, of Marlboro, Mass., who dropped on the Germans in France and Holland and fought in Belgium with the 101st Airborne Division, got hit in the back with shrapnel in January, and had just left the hospital: "Well, it's a great relief to know we don't have to go back to Germany. I've been thinking, though, that it might take at least another year to beat Japan. It isn't exactly something to look forward to."

S/Sgt. Louis A. Skotzky, 33, of Birmingham, Ala., personnel sergeant major in a Bomb Group, who's been overseas 33 months: "Of course I feel damn good about the victory in Europe. I've been over here so long, though, that I sure would like to get home for a couple of months. I don't think the Japanese will be as tough as the Jerries were."

Sgt. Albert M. Kubick, Prague, Okla., ATC: "I'm on leave from Brussels. I wish I were there now. I'd be drinking cognac instead of this mild and bitter."

T/Sgt. Warren F. Bauer, Chicago, of an evacuation hospital: "I'm on leave from Germany. It'll be funny to go back and find it all over. It's exciting, but I expected something bigger. I thought it would come suddenly and everyone pass out."

Sgt. Leonard J. Czarnowski, Chicago, 8th AAF waist gunner: "It's wonderful, boy, but I feel it's a bit early for me to celebrate. I've only been overseas since March and flown two missions. I'm pretty sure to be in the Pacific for the next two years, or however long the Jap war lasts."

How the Allies Beat the German Army

On the following five pages you will find a map-by-map description of how the Allies massed their strength for the final campaigns that hammered the German military machine to pieces.

WHEN the historians of the future attempt to answer the question "How did the Allies beat the German Army?" they will have to split the credit into many portions.

The final victory of the Allied ground forces would not have been possible except for such things as the relentless bombings of the European Continent by the RAF and U. S. Army Air Forces, the fight against the U-boats in the Battle of the Atlantic, the activity of anti-fascist underground and partisan movements in occupied Europe, and the miraculous performance of the war plant workers and research scientists in Britain, Russia and the U. S.

But if the historians are asked to name specific battles that were responsible for the downfall of the German Army in the second World War, they are not likely to point to any of the knockout punches that were thrown in Italy, France, Poland, the Balkans and Germany during the last few months. Two battles of 1942, the Russian victory at Stalingrad and the British Eighth Army's break-through at El Alamein, will probably stand out as the decisive factors in the defeat of Hitler's *Wehrmacht*.

Stalingrad and El Alamein were the high-water marks of the rising tide of German military advance. What would have happened if the Russians and the British had not turned back the flood at that critical stage of the war?

If the Germans had taken Stalingrad, they would have cut Russia off from her vital southern supply route to the Persian Gulf and gained for themselves the precious oil fields of Baku. And then they would have been able to smash north to Moscow and overrun the whole U.S.S.R.

If Rommel's *Afrika Korps* had not been stopped at El Alamein, it would have taken Cairo and the Suez Canal, giving the Axis complete control of the Mediterranean. Then with a huge pincer movement, one arm working southward from Russia and the other sweeping eastward from Egypt, the Nazis could have cut off Britain's Far East holdings and joined the Japs in India.

Needless to say, if the Germans had been able to go that far, Hitler, instead of Secretary of War Stimson, might be directing plans for the demobilization of the U. S. Army today.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE EUROPEAN WAR

1933

Jan. 30. Adolf Hitler and Nazi Party get control of Germany.

1934

July 25. Chancellor Engelbert Dollfuss of Austria is assassinated by Austrian Nazis.

1935

Jan. 13. The internationalized Saar Territory votes to return to Germany under League of Nations provisions.

1936

Mar 7. Hitler moves his new army into demilitarized Rhineland zone.

July 19. Spanish Civil War starts. Hitler sends Nazi troops to aid rebels.

Oct. 24. Rome-Berlin Axis is formed.

Nov. 25. Japan joins Axis.

1937

Jan. 30. Hitler repudiates "war guilt" clauses of Versailles Treaty.

Oct. 6. President Roosevelt urges quarantine of aggressor nations.

1938

Mar. 11. Nazi troops move into Austria.

Sept. 29. Germany, Italy, Britain and France hold Munich conference; Hitler promises peace, gets Sudeten province of Czechoslovakia.

1939

Mar. 4. Hitler ignores Munich Pact and takes rest of Czechoslovakia.

Apr. 27. Britain establishes first peacetime conscription.

Aug. 21. Germany and Russia sign 10-year non-aggression pact.

Aug. 23-25. Hitler demands Polish Corridor and Danzig.

Sept. 1. Seventy Nazi divisions attack Poland.

Sept. 3. Britain and France declare war on Germany.

Sept. 27. Poland falls in 26 days to blitzkrieg.

1940

Apr. 9. Germany attacks Denmark and Norway.

Apr. 14-17. Allies land in Norway.

May 10. German armies attack on western front. Winston Churchill replaces Neville Chamberlain.

May 14. Holland surrenders.

May 22-June 4. 335,000 British, French and Belgian troops are evacuated from Dunkirk.

May 28. Belgium surrenders.

June 10. Italy attacks France.

June 14. Paris is abandoned to the Germans.

June 22. France signs armistice at Compiegne.

Aug. 8. Battle of Britain begins in air.

Sept. 15. RAF and ack-ack shoot down 185 Nazi planes in climax of air war over Britain.

1941

Apr. 6. Germany begins blitz of Balkans.

Apr. 18. Yugoslavia falls.

Apr. 27. Germans enter Athens.

June 22. Germany attacks Russia.

Dec. 7. Japanese attack Pearl Harbor.

Dec. 11. Germany declares war on U.S.

1942

June 13. Near Bir Hacheim, Rommel ambushes British armor, forces British retreat into Egypt.

Oct. 23. Battle of El Alamein begins.

Nov. 2-3. Rommel starts long desert retreat.

Nov. 7. U.S. and British troops land in Africa at Casablanca, Oran and Algiers under Eisenhower. New Allied forces push into Tunisia, catching Axis African forces between Eisenhower's men in the west and Montgomery's in the east.

Nov. 8. Nazis open drive on Stalingrad.

Nov. 25. Red Army launches counteroffensive at Stalingrad.

Dec. 13. Rommel withdraws from El Agheila.

Dec. 24. Darlan assassinated.

1943

Jan. 31. Von Paulus surrenders at Stalingrad.

Feb. 24. Americans take Kasserine Pass.

Mar. 19. Americans occupy El Guettar.

May 7. Allies capture Tunis and Bizerte.

May 13. Axis evacuates Tunisia.

July 5. German summer push begins in Russia.

July 9. Allied invasion of Sicily begins.

July 25. Mussolini overthrown in Italy. Badoglio assumes leadership, promises that Italy will fight on.

Aug. 17. Sicily is taken.

Sept. 2. Soviet offensive pushes Nazis to Dnieper.

Sept. 3. British Eighth Army invades Italy. Italy surrenders.

Sept. 9. Fifth Army lands at Salerno.

Oct. 1 Fifth Army enters Naples.

1944

Jan. 1. Allies are pinned down at Cassino.

Jan. 25. Fifth Army units land at Anzio-Nettuno.

May 11. Fifth and Eighth Armies start offensive which breaks Cassino deadlock.

June 4. Allies occupy Rome.

June 6. D-Day. Allies land on Normandy beaches after great airborne assault on France.

June 26. Cherbourg surrenders.

Aug. 4. Allies take Florence, Italy.

Aug. 15. Seventh Army invades Southern France.

Aug. 23. Allies liberate Paris.

Sept. 1. Allies enter Belgium.

Sept. 11. Allies enter Holland; American and British forces invade German soil.

Sept. 17. Allied Airborne Army lands in Holland but fails to hold bridgehead at Arnhem.

Sept. 19. Armistice signed by Finland, Russia and Great Britain.

Oct. 14. British enter Athens.

Oct. 21. Aachen surrenders.

Nov. 3. Flushing is captured by British, enabling the Allies to open the Port of Antwerp.

Dec. 16. Rundstedt opens counter-offensive on Belgian and Luxembourg frontiers.

Dec. 27. Bastogne is relieved.

1945

Jan. 12. British and U.S. troops join up between Bastogne and Laroche.

Jan. 19. Red Army 20 miles inside Germany.

Jan. 30. Germans withdraw inside Siegfried Line. Third Army crosses River Our.

Feb. 7. Russians break through across the Oder.

Feb. 23. Turkey declares war on Germany and Japan.

Feb. 24. Americans storm across Roer River.

Mar. 8. Remagen Bridge over the Rhine captured by U. S. First Army.

Mar. 17. U.S. Third Army takes Coblenz. Whole German line between Saarbrucken and Rhine breaking wide open.

Mar. 22. Third Army crosses Rhine.

Mar. 27. Last V-Bomb hits England; 8,400 killed, 25,000 badly hurt since June 15, 1944.

Apr. 12. President Roosevelt dies; President Truman sworn in.

Apr. 13. Vienna falls.

Apr. 16. Americans liberate Buchenwald.

Apr. 23. Russians break into Berlin.

Apr. 26. Americans and Russians link at Elbe, cutting Reich in two.

Apr. 29. Germans surrender in Italy and West Austria.

Apr. 30. Mussolini reported executed.

May 1. German radio announces death of Hitler.

May 2. Russians capture Berlin.

May 8. V-E Day.

OCTOBER, 1942: HITLER'S HIGH TIDE

MAY, 1945: THE TIDE RUNS OUT

Africa

THE war in Africa was the biggest seesaw battle ever fought. It lasted two years and nine months and set the stage for the Allied invasion of Italy.

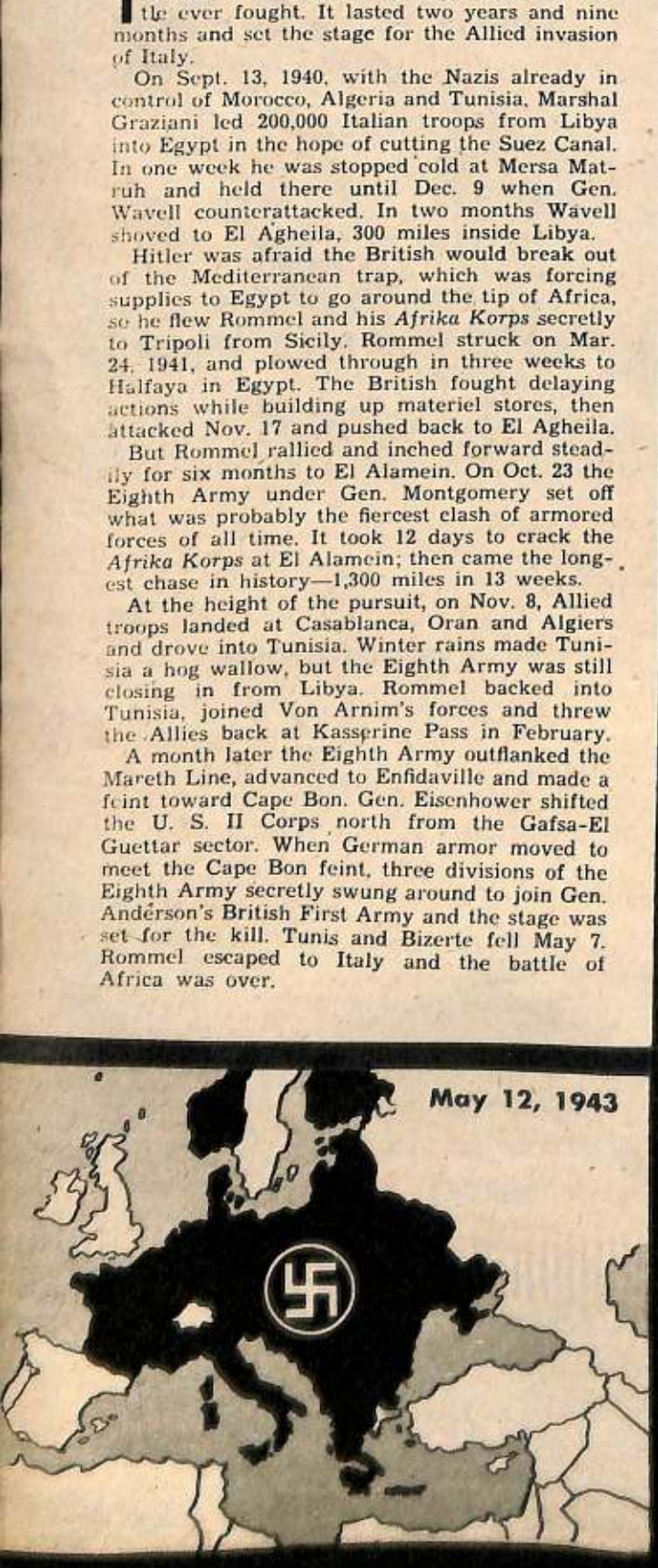
On Sept. 13, 1940, with the Nazis already in control of Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia, Marshal Graziani led 200,000 Italian troops from Libya into Egypt in the hope of cutting the Suez Canal. In one week he was stopped cold at Mersa Matruh and held there until Dec. 9 when Gen. Wavell counterattacked. In two months Wavell shoved to El Agheila, 300 miles inside Libya.

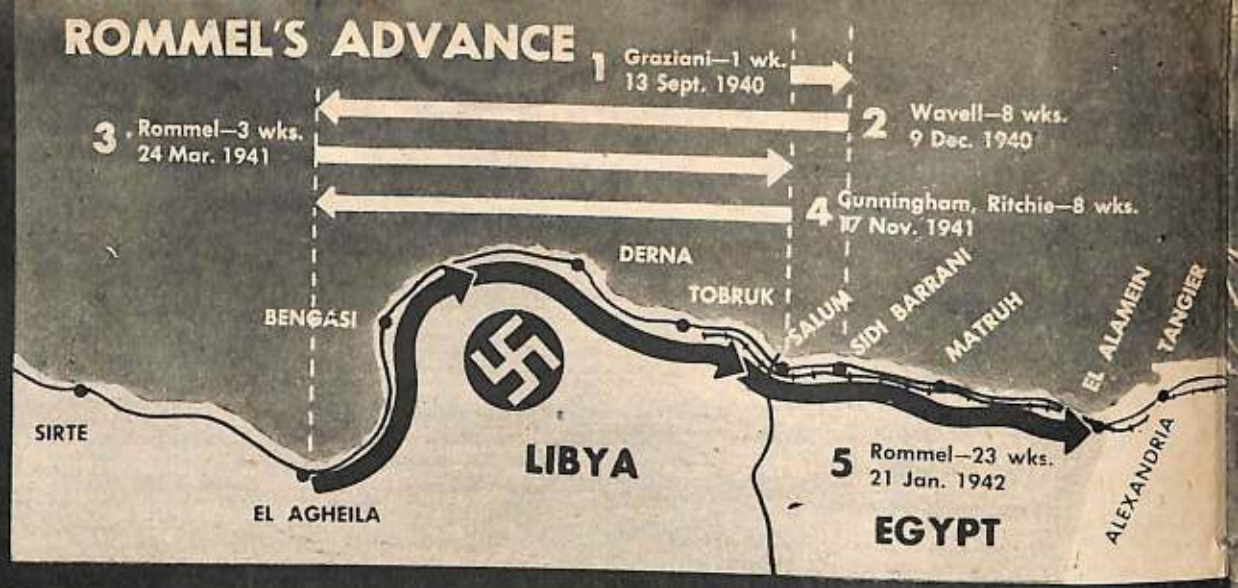
Hitler was afraid the British would break out of the Mediterranean trap, which was forcing supplies to Egypt to go around the tip of Africa, so he flew Rommel and his *Afrika Korps* secretly to Tripoli from Sicily. Rommel struck on Mar. 24, 1941, and plowed through in three weeks to Halfaya in Egypt. The British fought delaying actions while building up materiel stores, then attacked Nov. 17 and pushed back to El Agheila.

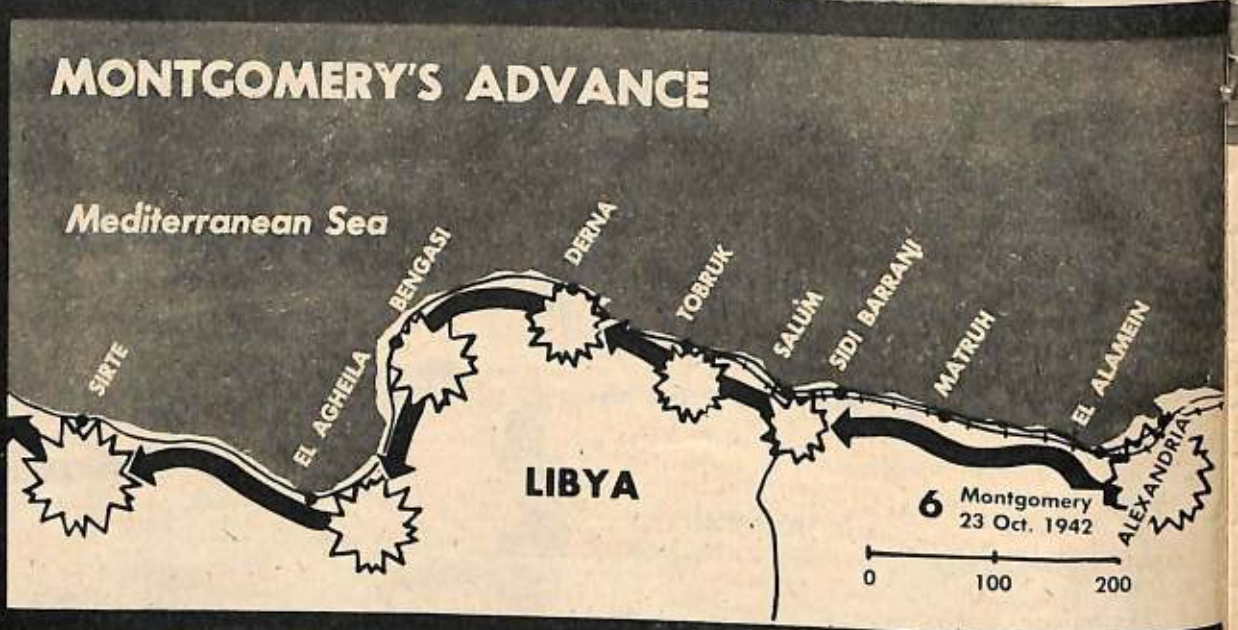
But Rommel rallied and inched forward steadily for six months to El Alamein. On Oct. 23 the Eighth Army under Gen. Montgomery set off what was probably the fiercest clash of armored forces of all time. It took 12 days to crack the *Afrika Korps* at El Alamein; then came the longest chase in history—1,300 miles in 13 weeks.

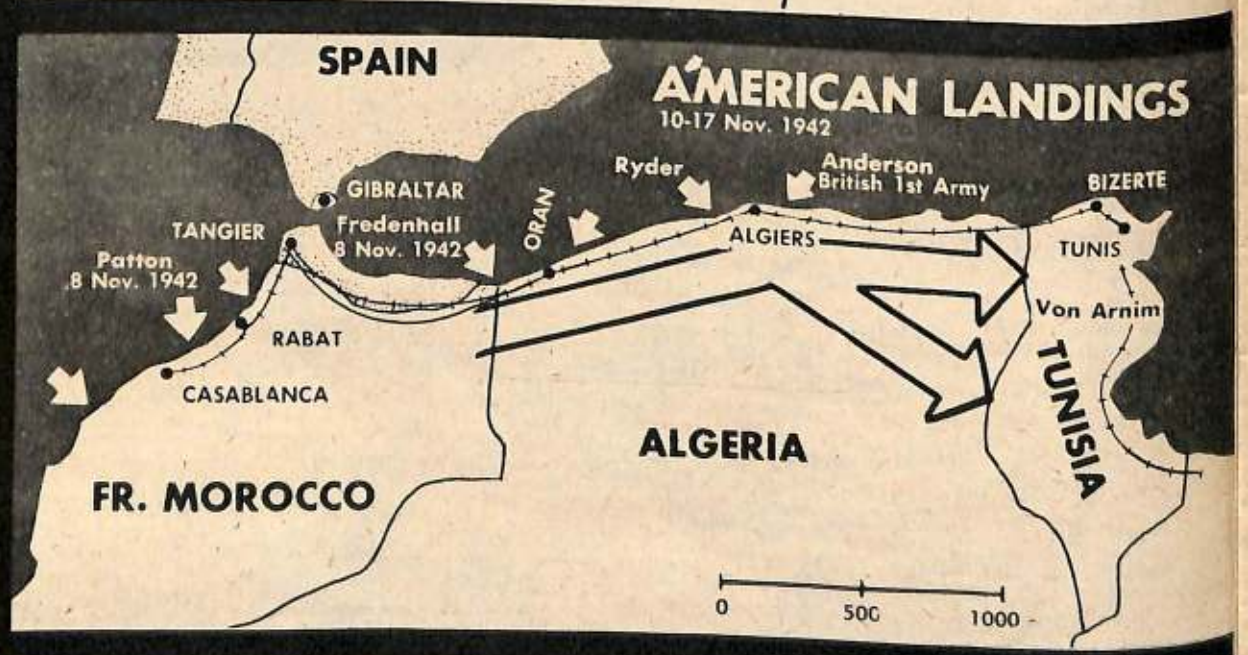
At the height of the pursuit, on Nov. 8, Allied troops landed at Casablanca, Oran and Algiers and drove into Tunisia. Winter rains made Tunisia a hog wallow, but the Eighth Army was still closing in from Libya. Rommel backed into Tunisia, joined Von Arnim's forces and threw the Allies back at Kasserine Pass in February.

A month later the Eighth Army outflanked the Mareth Line, advanced to Enfidaville and made a feint toward Cape Bon. Gen. Eisenhower shifted the U. S. II Corps north from the Gafsa-El Guettar sector. When German armor moved to meet the Cape Bon feint, three divisions of the Eighth Army secretly swung around to join Gen. Anderson's British First Army and the stage was set for the kill. Tunis and Bizerte fell May 7. Rommel escaped to Italy and the battle of Africa was over.









Italy

ITALY was never the "soft underbelly of Europe" that it was cracked up to be. The Germans went to pieces in France three months after the landing in Normandy but enemy forces on the Gothic Line were still strong one year after Italy was invaded from Sicily.

The U. S. Seventh and the British Eighth Armies had taken Sicily in 39 days when on September 3, 1943, the Eighth under Gen. Montgomery crossed to the toe of the Italian boot. The same day an Italian commission in Sicily agreed to an armistice, though the surrender was not announced until the 8th. Presumably those five days were to give the Italian armies a chance to race for strong positions against the Nazis and to permit the Italian Navy to escape to Allied ports.

The real Battle of Italy began the day after the surrender when Gen. Mark W. Clark's Fifth Army hit Salerno. It was a bloody beachhead for nine days before the Germans backed out of the city. Meanwhile the Eighth occupied the big naval base of Taranto and drove up the Adriatic coast to the Foggia airfields, which fell September 27, four days before the Fifth pushed into Naples.

It looked like a straight run from Naples to Rome, but the Germans threw up a stiff front at the foot of a hill honeycombed with artillery and machine guns. This was Cassino. Bad flying weather, mud and poor tactical positions stopped the Allies cold for four months.

In January the Fifth made a surprise leapfrog landing at Anzio to try to break through to Cassino from the rear but the Germans kept the beachhead confined to a few square miles. Cassino finally fell May 18 to elements of the Eighth after the Fifth Army broke through the Adolf Hitler Line in a coastal flank attack. Rome was liberated June 4 by powerful flying columns of the Fifth that drove swiftly to the Gothic Line.

There the Germans took advantage of the terrain to make another stand. For a second winter the Allies endured the miseries of Italian mountains and mud. Historians will record that the Italian campaign was one of the most punishing in warfare. They will also record that it brought the Axis one of its first major defeats.

France

THE Battle of France had to be fought not only to free France and the Low Countries but to defeat Germany on her home soil.

The opening of the "second front" was one of the most eagerly awaited events in world history. American, British and Canadian troops waded ashore between the mouths of the Orne and Vire Rivers on June 6, 1944. Thirteen hundred bombers and 640 naval guns opened the D-Day assault, and within four days fighter planes were flying from fields in France.

Cherbourg, one of France's best ports, was the first objective. The Yanks went after it while the British and Canadians at Caen held off the heaviest German strength from a rear attack.

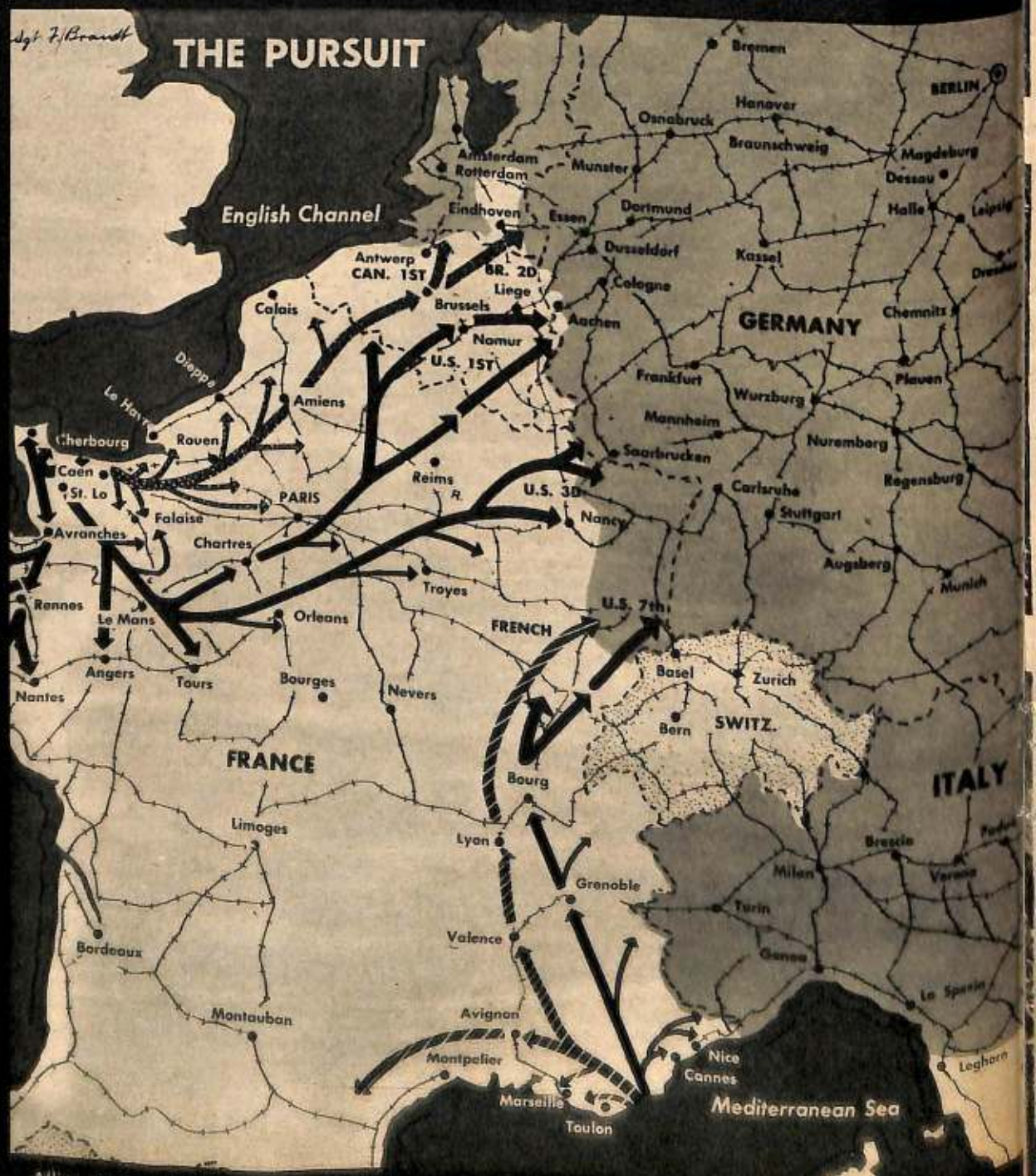
Before Cherbourg fell in 20 days, the invaders learned that this kind of warfare meant not just whittling down armies but fighting battles against two or three men in a house. Every hedgerow was a separate mission. The German tactic was to hold out and kill as many Allied soldiers as possible, then quit when the going got tough.

For a month after the fall of Cherbourg the pace was desperately slow until the crushing weight of Allied tanks spilled over into Brittany from the St. Lo-Periers break-through in July. That was the time, if ever, for Germany to bring up reserves. But the reserves were cut off.

The U. S. Third Army swung wide eastward toward Paris, then suddenly cut back north as, at the same time, the Canadian First and British Second Armies advanced on Falaise. The German Fifth and Seventh Armies were trapped.

There was no successful stand against the Allies for weeks after that until the British Second and the U. S. First and Third Armies reached the Siegfried Line on the borders of Germany. There was no battle of Paris. The capital was quickly liberated by a popular uprising, aided by French and American columns. Emotionally it was the most stirring day of the war until the Germans finally collapsed.

Landings of the Seventh Army of French and U. S. troops in southern France between Toulon and Cannes supplied another twist to the vise. But the Allies had to relax the pressure temporarily when they ran far ahead of their supplies.



Allies cracked Atlantic Wall. The Nazis, forced to fight on three fronts, fell back to the Siegfried Line.

Russia

THE biggest battle in history began June 22, 1941, when 165 German divisions carried the blitzkrieg into Russia. The Nazis thought they could crush the Red Armies and capture Leningrad, Moscow and Kiev before Russian strength could be mustered. Germany would then be free to press on against Britain without danger from the east and the Nazi armies would be fed by Russian produce and fueled by Russian oil.

In the first six months the Germans almost achieved their goal. Leningrad was under siege. Nazi spearheads were within sight of Moscow. Kiev, Kharkov, the Crimea and Rostov were lost. Things looked so good for the Axis by December 1941 that Japan decided to get into the war, too.

But then the Nazis ran into a surprise at Moscow. Seven armies and two cavalry corps knocked them back more than 50 miles and in the south Marshal Timoshenko retook Rostov. On Dec. 8, 1941, Hitler had to say his troops were "withdrawing to predetermined positions."

All winter stubborn Russian troops and guerrillas fought the Germans to a standstill. But in the summer of 1942, with 75 more divisions, the Germans stormed southward through Rostov to the Grozny oil fields in the Caucasus with the main drive directed toward Stalingrad, the city that commanded the main routes to the oil of Baku and to the "back door" entry to Moscow. The Nazi defeat at Stalingrad was the turning point of the Battle of Russia and probably of the entire war against Germany.

In the summer of 1943, with 300 divisions against Hitler's 218, the Red Army burst the Leningrad trap and then in 1944 pounded through Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania to East Prussia.

The Ukrainian Soviet armies mopped up Kharkov, Kiev and the Crimea and crashed through Poland to crumple German resistance at Warsaw. A southern thrust brought Rumania to her knees and occupied Bulgaria.

When Red troops met Marshal Tito's forces in Yugoslavia, the Allies' stranglehold was complete. Germany had made many mistakes during the war, and even Hitler could see that its biggest one was the attack on Russia.

STALINGRAD

THE German offensive of summer 1942 drove the Russians to the Don River at Stalingrad. From three sides Marshal von Paulus' German Sixth Army besieged the city defended by Gen. Chuikov's Sixty-Second Red Army. The main Nazi thrusts swept through Stalingrad's industrial and residential sections, swallowed up the main railway station and broke through to the river at several points.

For two months the Russians fought back with tommy guns, grenades and shovels. Then Russian reserves sneaked into the city from the east, and on Nov. 19 five tanks disguised as Germans crawled through the Nazi lines and captured the Kalach Bridge, one of the gateways to the city. In 11 days two tank-cavalry teams cutting far behind the German rear had completely encircled the Germans and two months later von Paulus had to surrender.

The Red Army, marshaling its strength, took everything Germany dished out, then crushed the invaders.

1 For most of us it began on October 29, 1940, when Secretary Stimson pulled out the first number.

2 We repeated the oath before the flag and wondered if we'd be "back in a year, little darling."

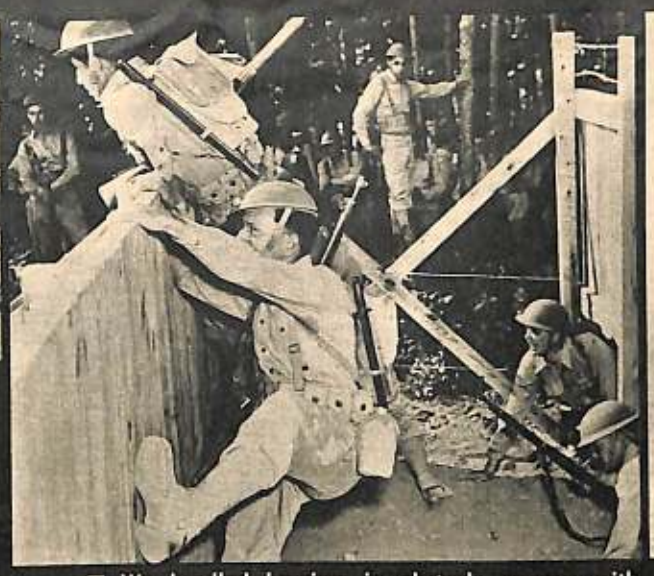
3 Trains pulled in at Southern camps, and we marched off lugging barracks bags and suitcases.

The GI's War in Europe

A Picture Story of the American Soldier's Fight Against Germany and Italy from Induction to Victory.

7 And GIs were being sent to Iceland. Traveling on the North Atlantic was often plenty rough.

4 "All present and accounted for." We stood in line, drilled, made packs and stood in line.



5 We hurdled barriers in obstacle courses with those basin helmets sliding around on our heads.

6 Some left the States early. U. S. forces were sent to build bases in Greenland in April 1941.

8 A GI main street in Iceland, lined with Nissen huts. It seemed pretty bleak and far from home.

9 We landed in Northern Ireland in January 1942. Yanks paraded in fresh blouses with gas masks.

10 We were starting to assemble men and supplies in Britain. GIs saw English pubs for the first time.

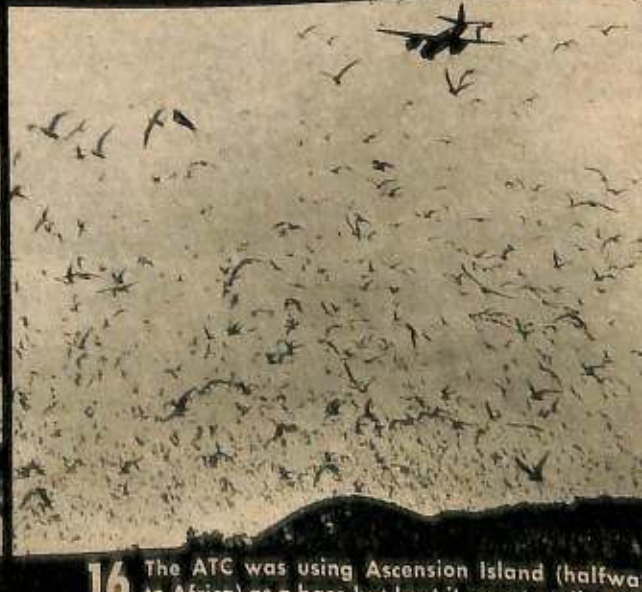
11 More and more American planes were flying from English fields as ground crews waved them off.

12 Eighth Air Force Forts first raided Europe in July 1942. These B-17s were bombing in France.

13 B-17 crews were tired after getting back but they usually had plenty of things to talk about.

14 Krauts were caught napping when the Eighth Air Force first bombed as far as East Prussia.

15 Rangers, back from the Dieppe raid, August 1, 1942, were first to fight German ground troops.



16 The ATC was using Ascension Island (halfwa to Africa) as a base but kept it secret until 194

17 The war against fascism brought us to Egypt in 1942, where some of us did a little sightseeing.

18 And the war brought us to Iran, where we kept the lend-lease goods moving toward Russia.

19 On November 7, 1942, bad day for the Axis, we landed on beaches of French North Africa.

20 Most GIs who occupied Oran saw a liberated city for the first time and found they liked it.

21 In Tunisia the Germans fought or tried, like this one, to get away. Either way they lost.

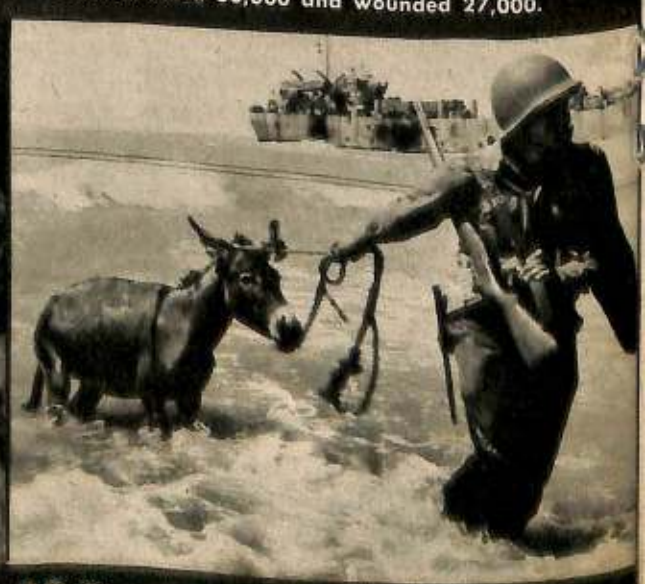
22 We fought over the desert and dry hills and watched everything the enemy was doing.

25 When we entered Tunis it was a happy day for Frenchmen, British and Americans alike.

26 When the Tunisian campaign ended, in May 1942, the war was over for a lot of German and Italian prisoners. The Allies had captured 291,000 Axis soldiers, killed 30,000 and wounded 27,000.

28 MPs were about the only GIs who saw the famous Casbah in Algiers. It was out of bounds.

29 Next step was Sicily. In planes, or on landing boats, we wondered how tough it would be.



30 We waded ashore on July 9, 1943, sloshing through the surf and cussing at the mules.

23 Infantry and armor took one Tunisian town after another as the Nazi armies retreated.

24 As always, digging a foxhole, like this one by the side of the road, was good insurance.

27 GIs of the Signal Corps worked overtime in North Africa setting up communications.

31 The kids in Sicily were almost as good at observation as we were, being curious—like kids.

32 We fought snipers in the Sicilian towns, with the sun shining through the smoke and dust.

33 The medics did a job in Sicily, as they have done in all other combat areas in this war.

34 We invaded Italy in September 1943. The Italians quit, but Nazi bombers still unloaded on us.

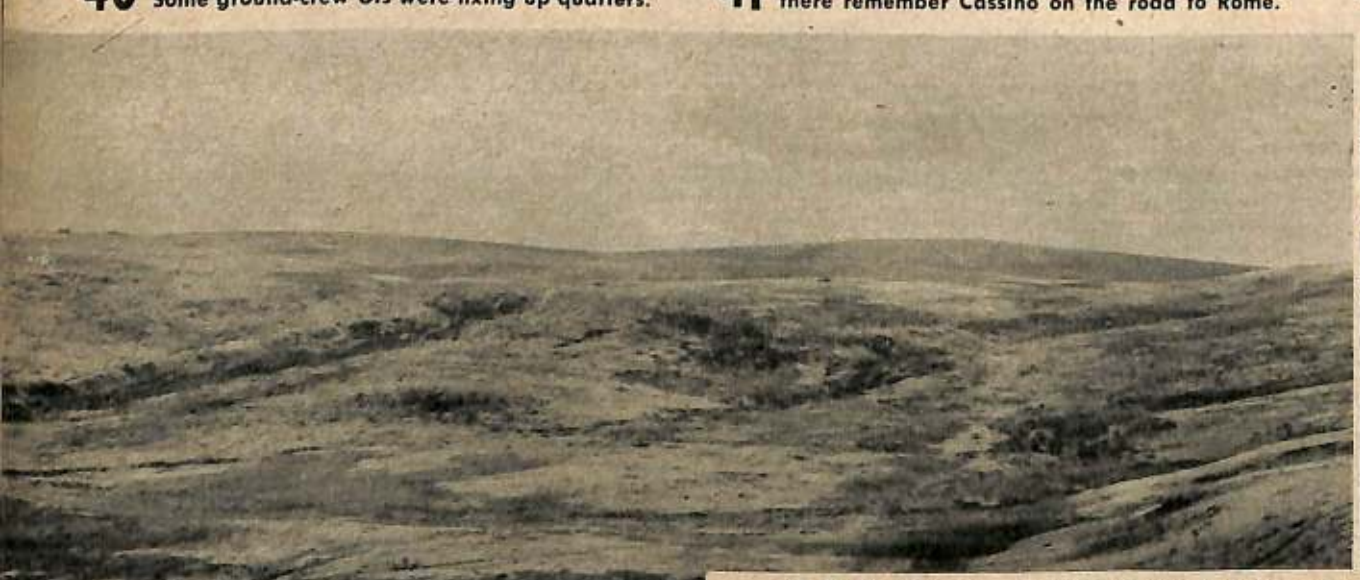
35 When we got into Italy we had to cross over one long range of mountains after another.

36 And most GIs who took a hill went on to take the next one, but some of them didn't.

40 The Fifteenth Air Force was taking off from Italy. Some ground-crew GIs were fixing up quarters.

41 All Italy and all Allied soldiers who fought there remember Cassino on the road to Rome.

42 We occupied Rome on June 4, 1944. Some got a pretty guide to show them the Colosseum.



46 We were getting set for France in a big way, maneuvering in strength over the English moors.

47 And finally we were jammed up against the loading docks, ready for sailing orders.

50 They made it but had to take a breather and were in no mood to smile at the camera.

37 The Army nurses were there when we made the Anzio-Nettuno beachhead. We needed them.

38 And we needed artillery. You're a bit more confident with a "Long Tom" backing you up.

39 Another part of war in Italy was the girls who came over to put on a show, rain or shine.

43 Although chasing the enemy, there was time to pause for a little GI side show on the way.

44 As the war went on in Italy you ran across quite a few nice Wacs working in headquarters.

45 Before Rome fell we were still in England, training very hard, getting ready for D-Day.

48 D-Day came, on June 6, 1944. Some lost time in the water before reaching France.

49 It seemed quite a way from the boats to shore. The invaders carried a lot of equipment.

51 We got farther inland and met some of the people. It was easy to get a laugh.

52 We met up with French civilians who were very nice about quenching a soldier's thirst.

53 The Ninth Air Force needed air fields in France. Engineers were there to lay them out.

54 The break-through at St. Lo began in July, and then we broke out into the French plains.

55 The Krauts retreated, leaving a lot of their baggage twisted and burning on the roads.

56 In Italy we were moving to the shore to board landing craft and invade southern France.

57 We hit southern France on August 15 and met some Maquis who were veteran Nazi-fighters.

58 Ordnancemen had plenty to do keeping guns in repair, even salvaging enemy weapons.

59 We plowed into Brittany and attacked the port of Brest, fighting through the streets.

60 The liberation of Paris came on August 25, and people turned out to cheer and sing.

62 We went through the old Maginot Line, which didn't look so tough when you got close.

63 For many GIs entering Belgium it was a nice thing to be appreciated by the right people.

64 We got through Huertgen Forest in November, but it was a slow, cruel push for the infantry.

61 We couldn't all stay and celebrate in Paris but we put on a good show on the way.

65 Many GIs found that Army nurses were the only good part of lying wounded in a hospital.

66 Aachen, which was surrendered on October 20, was the first big German city we fought for.

67 A break was a break anyway you looked at it, but having some mail made it even better.

68 The more casualties the more work for the medics, who were hit themselves often enough.

69 We got through Belgium but we left thousands behind who will never leave Belgian soil.

70 When winter hit the Western Front even hot chow didn't keep us warm for very long.

73 The winter reached its height when we got into Germany. GIs worked in howling blizzards.

74 The Germans under Von Rundstedt started their big counterattack in the Ardennes December 16.

75 GIs will long remember the part the defenders of Bastogne played in stopping Von Rundstedt.

77 Negro artillerymen helped blast what was left of the Siegfried Line as we went on.

78 The line of prisoners grew as we went from the Roer to the Rhine, and they got less cocky.

79 Some weren't going so fast that they couldn't stop to dance with a few Red Cross girls.

81 Going into Germany we saw refugees all the way, lugging their families and their goods.

82 Cologne was captured on March 7, 1945. And with that the end in Germany was not far off.

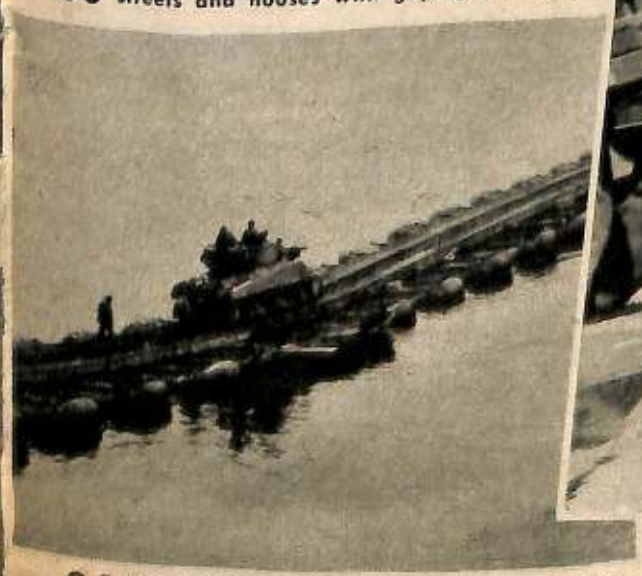
83 Also on March 7, First Army GIs found the Remagen bridge intact and crossed the Rhine.

71 The Infantry filed through the snow-covered Forest of the Ardennes toward the front.

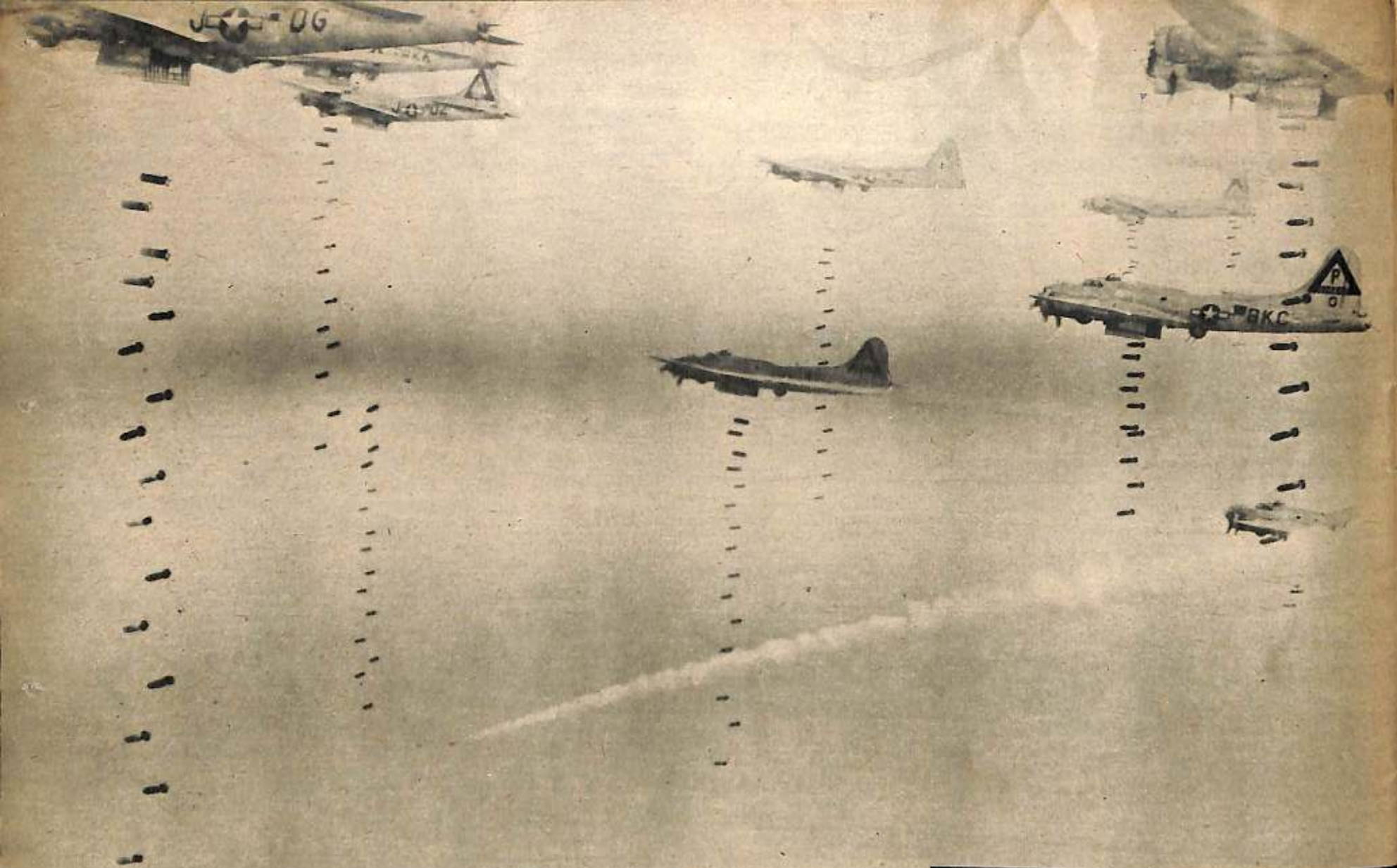
72 The spotlight was on winter in western Europe, but there were snow and cold for GIs in Italy, too.

76 One thing a man can always do to get a welcome relief from war is to look at a YANK pin-up. (Adv.)

80 We took more German cities with empty streets and houses with gaping windows.



84 Then we began to get ponton bridges across the river and the last big offensives were on.



Cause . . .

The Story Of The

By Sgt. ED ROSENTHAL

When the Eighth Air Force dropped its last stick of bombs on Germany, there ended an American "experiment" which had become one of the most significant elements of victory in Europe. Wherever Lt. Gen. Ira C. Eaker was on V-E Day, he must have reflected upon this as the news came.

A little over three years before, only 10 weeks after Pearl Harbor, seven men sat at dinner in the Dorchester Hotel, London. They speared their spam with forks held in their right hands—then conspicuous and unorthodox. They held some equally unorthodox but less conspicuous convictions about aerial warfare.

The strangers were Gen. Eaker and six other U.S. Army Officers, an advance detachment that had just arrived to lay the groundwork for an American Air Force of nearly 200,000 men in Britain which eventually was to send 2,000 heavy bombers and nearly 1,000 fighters over Germany between dawn and dark on a single day.

Their mission, of course, was secret. They made their ideas inconspicuous because those ideas were radical and contrary to conclusions that had been drawn by both Britain and Germany, the two greatest air powers then, from experience in the war up to that time.

During the few months of the Battle of Britain, the *Luftwaffe* had lost more than 2,000 planes in daylight attacks. The RAF had lost up to 50 per cent of the bombers it had dispatched on a single daylight mission. Both British and Germans had converted to night bombardment.

Daylight bombardment of Europe, since then taken for granted, was at the time controversial dynamite. Eaker wanted to keep the projected experiment secret from everyone except from the RAF, which generously agreed to provide the laboratory and many appurtenances. Much opinion on both sides of the Atlantic, and *all* the evidence, were against the plan.

In Normandy about two years later, a GI tanker in Lt. Gen. George S. Patton's Army radioed his love to a Thunderbolt overhead which had just knocked out a troublesome Panther ahead. At that moment, 1,500 Flying Fortresses and Liberators, with 700 Mustangs escorting them, were bombing hell out of Panther tank and Focke-Wulf fighter factories at Leipzig, deep in Germany. If the GI tanker had had time for philosophizing, he might also have reflected that the Focke-Wulfs weren't doing *to* him what the Thunderbolt was doing *for* him, and that there was just one Panther ahead instead of three.

Credit for this state of affairs is due in large part to the men who conceived the experiment, who pushed it through, and to the GIs and officers who died to make it work.

It wasn't easy.

An army of half-a-million men on heavy anti-aircraft artillery pointed skyward throughout Europe, and a potent *Luftwaffe* fighter force, just across the Channel, waited.

Nobody guaranteed Eaker success. He warned his men that it was not going to be "a game of patty cake" and that there would be heavy losses "before we can sweep in the blue chips."

At that time, the *Luftwaffe* ruled the skies over Europe in a darkening world. Bataan had fallen while the Eighth was engaged in the laborious business of obtaining fields, supplies, personnel and, most important, planes. (In the Spring of 1942 they had exactly one—a British Oxford which was used for transporting officers about England.) Gen. Douglas MacArthur needed planes and supplies in the Pacific. The Red Army had been pushed back toward Stalingrad, and Rommel had prepared his tanks for driving the bedraggled British forces out of Egypt. By early August, 1942, the Allies had sunk to a lower point than at any time in the last war.

Meanwhile, a trickle of officers, men and supplies had arrived in England to set up skeleton staffs for the Eighth Air Force, which on paper called for 200,000 men—larger than the entire U.S. Army, including the Air Corps, had been three years before.

The spadework had started. Absorbing the RAF's extensive battle experience and obtaining fields and supplies on a lend-lease basis, the Americans began to pierce the black clouds of defeat. While Yanks and RAF men came to learn about each other's ways over mild-and-bitter, a firm friendship had grown between Gen. Eaker and Air Marshal A. T. Harris, boss of the RAF Bomber Command. At a small charity gathering in June, 1942, Gen. Eaker told his new British friends about the Eighth's plans in a speech noted for its brevity:

"We won't do much talking until we've done more fighting," he said. "We hope that when we leave, you'll be glad we came. Thank you."

On July 4, 1942, the United States didn't have much to celebrate. Although the American continent had not been hit (except for Dutch Harbor, in Alaska, and a few sporadic submarine attacks on the West Coast), the Germans and Japs were supreme in the air and on the ground. But the date has become important in Eighth Air Force history because it marked the first action by an American air unit over the European Continent. Six American crews in A-20 Bostons joined with the RAF in hitting an airfield in Holland. The mission was noted for the bravery of Capt. Charles C. Kegelman, a pilot who inaugurated the Eighth's tradition of bombing the target and returning—if humanly possible. After flak had shot away the right propeller and punctured the nose section of Kegelman's Boston, its right wingtip and fuselage scraped the ground, but the captain flew directly at a flak tower ahead, silencing it with his nose guns and returned on one engine to win the DSC from Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower.

That summer, English farmers and children who

had learned their aircraft recognition by necessity during the *Luftwaffe* raids were amazed to see a new type of aircraft in the skies. It bore American markings and resembled no bomber they had ever seen. They wondered when these planes, which they came to know as Flying Fortresses, would cross the Channel and what the results would be.

THE first answer came on Aug. 17, 1942, when the B-17E stretched its combat wings for the first time over Europe, attacking railway marshalling yards at Rouen, France. Escorted by RAF Spitfires, 12 Forts headed towards France that morning. A nervous audience had gathered at an airfield in the English Midlands to sweat out the return. Flying at 22,500 feet with perfect weather, the 12 planes dropped 21 tons on and near the target. In the lead Fort of the second section was Gen. Eaker, squirming in his seat from a mixture of excitement and a host of hornet stings he'd picked up during a duck-hunting incident the day before. The only casualties sustained were those of the navigator and bombardier of a Fort which collided with a flight of pigeons.

Six additional bombers, flying two diversionary missions, so confused the Germans that the formation of 12 was not reported until it was close to the target, at which time the enemy excitedly reported: "Achtung—12 Lancasters." Only a few interceptors approached the bombers and one FW-190 was shot down by Sgt. Ken West, a ball-turret gunner.

Headlines in all Allied nations proclaimed the successful feat. The ghost of Billy Mitchell grinned. This small beginning proved nothing in particular, but it was a beginning.

Mountainous obstacles still loomed to block the Eighth. Germany, as if scenting the challenge, had embarked upon a huge program to quadruple her already strong fighter force, the thousand-bladed sword expected to decapitate the Eighth. England was still a small island, shockingly vulnerable to air, land and sea attack. U-boats roamed the Atlantic, preying on supplies needed to wage air warfare from Britain.

Without fighters that could escort the bombers all the way to the target, large numbers of bombers were needed to provide massed firepower and to spread German fighter defenses by multi-pronged attacks. The strength in numbers upon which the success of the experiment was considered dependent accumulated slowly. Liberator groups came, and Lightnings for escort, only to be whisked away to Africa with many of the fledgling Eighth's key ground and air personnel for the North African invasion.

It was eight months after the first mission before the Eighth was able to put 100 bombers over a target.

But the pioneering old First Wing carried on through a 1942-43 fall and winter which threatened the existence of the Eighth. Ground crews scrounged and scraped to keep the pitifully meager supply of bombers fit for combat. Air crews were painfully aware of their losses, and the slowness of replacements. Like insurance men, they calculated the life-expectancy problem and came out with an answer of less than nil. Nevertheless, they went on slugging it out with the *Luftwaffe* and hitting the target. One squadron began operations in November, 1942, with 90 men, receiving a few replacements later on. After six months the squadron record showed 115 men killed or missing in action.

Meanwhile, Americans of the renowned Eagle Squadron transferred from the RAF to the Eighth in September, bringing their Spitfires with them, and later became famous as Col. Don Blakeslee's Fourth Fighter Group.

As the "experiment" entered '43, the *Luftwaffe* flexed its muscles with new strength, boasting 1,600 front-line fighters. New fighters were rolling off Nazi production lines in increasing volume. *Flieger Abwehr Kanonen* (anti-aircraft cannon) were multiplied into the most deadly flak defenses the world had ever seen.

Gen. Eaker was called to Casablanca in January, 1943, to report to the United Nations commanders on his progress. Though the still small Eighth had not yet been able to muster enough planes to penetrate into Germany proper, Eaker got the green light. On January 27 the Eighth passed an important milestone, when its bombers, 53 of them, crossed the German border for the first time, hitting U-boat yards at Wilhelmshaven with good results.

The situation picked up that spring and summer. The Allies had cleared off North Africa and moved on to Sicily. Stalingrad had been saved and the Russians were rolling the enemy back off Soviet territory in a successful summer offensive. Reinforced by men, planes and material from the U. S., the Eighth struck at a target only 80 miles from Berlin. An average of 630 Forts and Libs were now available, with more groups arriving each month. Long-range escorts, however, were still future history. There was no "mystery" about the *Luftwaffe* then, and bomber gunners knew as they left England that they would have to slug their way through.

In its first year of operations, the Eighth made 124 attacks, losing 472 bombers and nearly 5,000 men, dead or missing. For every bomber lost, four enemy aircraft were destroyed.

THE Eighth began its second year of operations still without long-range fighter escort but with a terrific fury which cast a long shadow over Hitler's continent. The anniversary date—August 17, 1943—was celebrated with assaults on two of Europe's most important targets. More than 350 Forts pushed unescorted through swarms of enemy fighters to blast the Schweinfurt ball-bearing plant and an aircraft factory at Regensburg. The bombers hitting Regensburg continued on to Africa, marking the first of the Eighth's shuttle missions. In a three-hour battle with the *Luftwaffe*, 300 enemy fighters were destroyed for a loss of 60 bombers. The Regensburg attack cost the Germans at least two full months of production there, the equivalent of 500 Me-190s.

In July and August, the Eighth put the first crimp in the rising curve of German fighter strength. Successful blows at fighter plants and sharp gunnery sent German fighter losses higher and production of replacements lower. The *Luftwaffe* was operating in the red for the first time—but only temporarily.

Meantime, the Eighth's Libs had been called to Africa again. There they joined Ninth Air Force Libs to fly the long haul across the Mediterranean for the historic first attack on the Ploesti oilfields in Rumania, on Aug. 1, 1943, going in at smoke-stack height. After attacks on Rome and other targets the Libs returned to England.

Just as the Eighth threatened to gain supremacy over the German Air Force, the old bogey of winter weather pulled down a screen behind which German planes multiplied again.

Both sides worked feverishly for the crucial air battles expected as soon as the weather lifted. Against the Allies' double-pronged weapon of the RAF and Eighth, the *Luftwaffe* prepared to fight for its life.

Allied research laboratories and tacticians matched brains with the Germans in advancing methods of aerial warfare. Factories behind the American and German borders worked overtime to supply the combat units with the needed planes. Huge convoys delivered flyers and ground men to England for the coming air struggle. The High Commands of Allies and Germans looked to their air forces upon which the fate of Europe might depend.

During the early winter of 1943-1944, the Eighth had introduced long-range P-51 Mustangs capable of flying to Berlin and back. Lighter than Thunderbolts, less heavily armored, in the coming months of 1944 they were to escort bombers to every corner of Europe. Treated-paper fuel tanks had also increased the range of Thunderbolts, which showed a favorable score against the *Luftwaffe*.

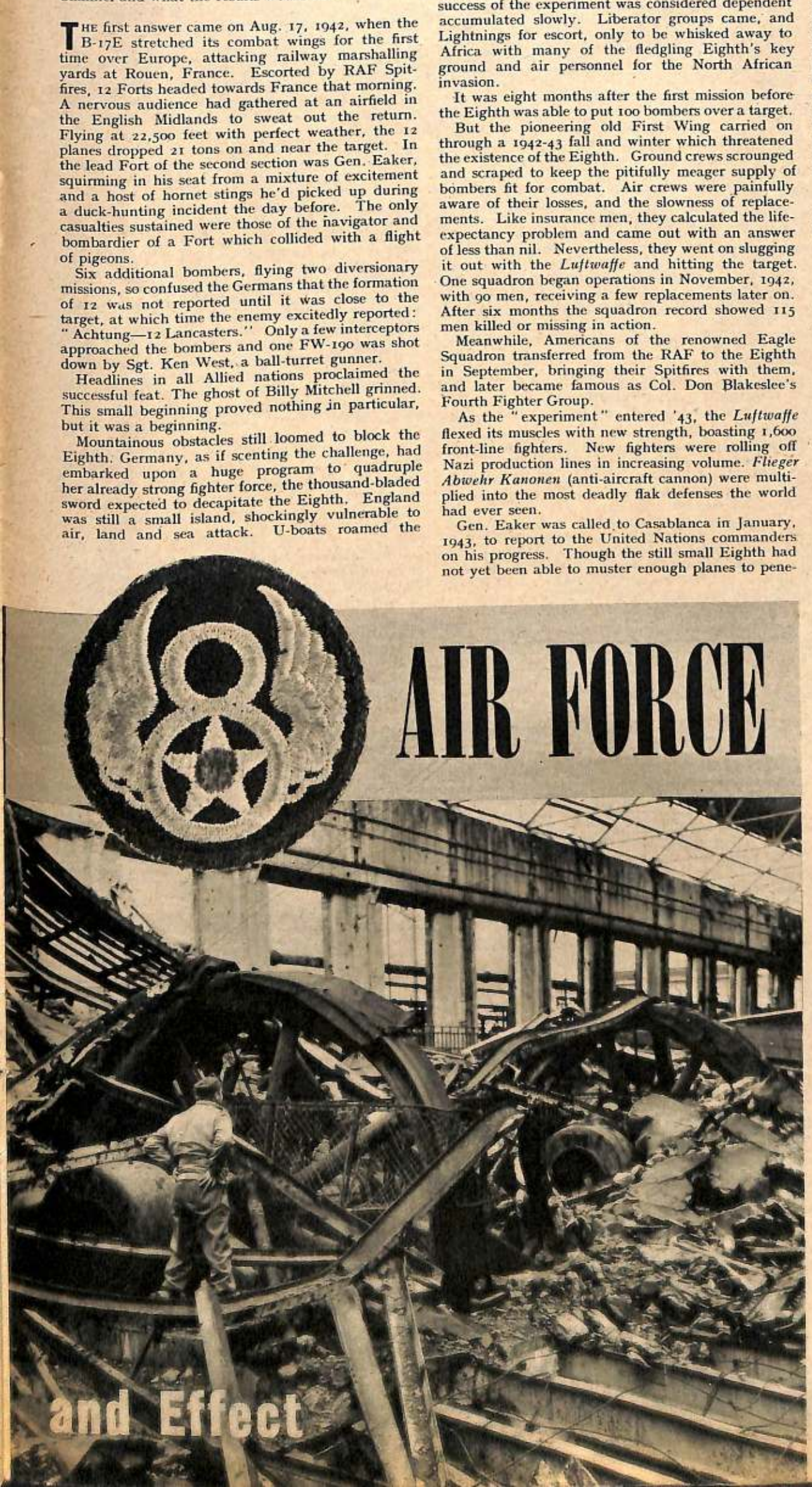
Recognizing the growing danger of bombardment, the Germans resorted to underground factories, more deadly flak and new aerial tactics. In addition, the Hun had developed a new and merciless weapon—the V-bomb which was to attack London in the coming months.

Only by the time Maj. Gen. James H. Doolittle came to the Eighth as new C.G. in January, 1944, two years after this Air Force had been activated in Savannah, Ga., was its strength beginning to approach the original conception. Demands of world-wide war had not yet permitted the Eighth enough bombers to send 1,000 of them against Germany in a single day.

However, the Eighth was strong and growing stronger, and long-range fighter escort had arrived. This was historically important for, under cover of winter, German fighter production had expanded to a new high. With heavier armament and better tactics, German fighters had become more formidable.

(continued on page 22)

8 AIR FORCE



and Effect

MANY OF THE BIG BOMBERS CAME BACK TO THEIR BASES ONLY THROUGH THE SKILL, BRAVERY AND DETERMINATION OF THE CREWS.

Doolittle gravely considered the question foremost in his mind. Would the Eighth be able to cripple German fighter production before the increased strength and lethal power of the *Luftwaffe* crippled the Eighth?

Feb. 20, 1944, dawned cold and clear. The Eighth's first 1,000-bomber armada went after the German fighter industry in the first of a series of critical air battles. For six days, involving five devastating assaults on German plane plants, the battle continued in German skies. It represented a tremendous climax to a struggle upon which depended control of the sky and successful invasion of Europe.

As bombers streamed across the English Channel, escorted by hundreds of Thunderbolts and Mustangs, the *Luftwaffe* rose to defend their birthplace—aircraft factories. Furious battles were fought between fighter planes ranging from 30,000 feet to tree-top level. Names like Gabreski, Gentile, Zemke, Blakeslee, Johnson and Mahurin caught the public fancy, glamorizing a grim life-and-death struggle. American parachutes carried hundreds of airmen into German prison camps. American GIs died violently as bombers exploded in mid-air, when German interceptors sneaked through the fighter screen to hit the Germans' greatest enemy of the moment.

Thousands of tons of American bombs brought death, devastation—and victory. In the five attacks, the Eighth damaged or destroyed aircraft plants accounting for 75 percent of Germany's total fighter production. The hope of the *Luftwaffe* to match expanding Allied air might had been broken. Germany's monthly production had been pushed back below the 1942 rate.

ONE of the greatest battles occurred on Feb. 22 during a Liberator assault on a Messerschmitt plant at Gotha. For 700 miles and 3½ hours, the Libs were hit by enemy aircraft firing rockets, cannon and machineguns. The Germans attacked in waves of 30 to 40. Thirty-three out of 230 Libs were lost, but the plant was virtually destroyed and 75 Nazi planes were shot down by the Libs.

The Eighth's giant paw continued to sweep German skies, knocking down interfering aircraft and pounding installations while fighter pilots went down into the teeth of anti-aircraft guns to destroy on the ground the German fighters that didn't come up.

By June 6, the Supreme Commander could say to GIs embarking for the invasion of Europe: "Don't worry about the planes overhead. They will be ours."

And that's the way it was. The *Luftwaffe* was unable to contest the invasion itself.

Between August 17, 1942, and June 6, 1944, the Eighth had destroyed 8,407 enemy planes in air combat and probably destroyed or damaged 7,697 more in the air and on the ground. The British Air Ministry conservatively estimated that at least 5,000 fighter aircraft were kept from action by Eighth Air Force bombardment of aircraft plants in the first five months of 1944 alone.

Concurrent with neutralization of the *Luftwaffe*, in May the Allied strategic air forces in Britain began the campaign against the life-blood of Germany's *Wehrmacht*—oil. By September, 1944, 75 per cent of the enemy's oil production as of March, 1944, had been stopped.

Paralleling this, the Eighth played a major role in salting down the invasion coast, cutting road and rail lines to isolate the battle area between the Loire and Seine rivers from German reinforcement, battering the marshalling yards, supplying the French resistance movement with guns and ammunition, dropping millions of leaflets on German cities, blasting V-bomb sites to spare London an even worse ordeal, and still blasting tank, half-track and motor-vehicle plants inside Germany at every opportunity.

Photo-reconnaissance planes mapped the continent for Gen. Eisenhower. Liberator bombers, the same that had blasted many German oil plants, temporarily became freighters and hauled gasoline to the continent to help keep Patton's Third Army rolling across France. Liberator crews packed bomb bays with weapons and supplies and parachuted them from low level to the Allied Airborne troops at Arnhem and Nijmegen, and again when the northern Rhine was crossed to begin the last great heave.

Strategic bombardment continued, for not until the day of Germany's complete surrender could it be certain that the Nazis would stop repairing and rebuilding the plants which were the source of their power to resist.

A captured telegram from Speer, Reichsminister of War Production, to Reichsleiter Bormann, Hitler's deputy, gives a glimpse of the havoc inside Germany: "The idea is spreading that reconstruction of oil plants is purposeless, since the enemy always finds a suitable moment, soon after resumption of work, to destroy them again . . .

"All means must be employed to assure that the workers engaged in reconstruction of the plants shall not be crippled in their efforts . . .

"We must not allow ourselves to give up hope that we must eventually be successful in gaining mastery over the enemy air forces. . . ."

The message was dated September 17, 1944.

Even so, the Eighth devoted to tactical targets, or direct ground force support, about one-third of the entire tonnage of bombs dropped in 1944.

ON Dec. 16, the winter weather was so thick that Rundstedt decided upon his counter-offensive, believing the Allied Air Forces couldn't leave their bases. Many agreed with him that they couldn't, but they did. The Eighth's bombers and fighters took off with visibility sometimes limited to 50 yards over runways coated with ice. The Eighth's largest force up to that time, 2,000 bombers and nearly 1,000 fighters, left their fog-covered British bases on Christmas Eve to help stop Rundstedt and save Bastogne by cutting roads and rails just back of the Bulge. This mighty air fleet was in striking contrast to the 12 bombers which attacked Rouen on Aug. 17, 1942. Ground and air forces combined to stop the German push in that historic Christmas week.

Short on oil and pilots, the *Luftwaffe* made a few more attempts to stop the tremendous bombardment, but the Eighth's fighter pilots cut them down again. The Eighth kept pounding at tank and armament plants, oil and rail targets, and jet-plane bases. In March, when the great heave came, the Eighth dropped a record 70,000 tons of bombs on Germany during the month, an amount equal to the total dropped during the entire first 18 months.

Germany was on the ropes.

On April 16, Gen. Carl Spaatz, USSTAF commander, announced that strategic air war was at an end in Europe and that from then on the strategic forces must "operate with our tactical air forces in close cooperation with our armies." Signifying the change in its status, the Eighth undertook a new kind of mission in the first three days of May, dropping 3¼ million meals to the starving population in Holland.

By that time some figures could be assembled to show the vast size of the Eighth's efforts. Almost 700,000 tons of bombs had been dropped. Germany, alone, had caught 530,000 tons, or an average of one ton every minute, day and night, for a year.

Casualty figures showed that 43,687 fighter pilots and bomber crews had lost their lives in action or were missing in action. Another 1,923 were seriously injured.

Before the complete collapse, the Eighth's bombing line had narrowed to such a degree that targets were hard to find. The Allied troops had occupied cities and towns whose names had been headlined only a year before as bombing targets.

The Eighth has finished in Europe the job it began against then-current opinion and precedent. Goering's boast that Allied aircraft would never fly over Germany sounds silly now—but it wasn't so funny when he said it.

Now the eyes of the Eighth are focussed on Japan. There will be more than 12 bombers on its first mission there.

MILESTONES IN THE HISTORY OF THE 8TH

1942

Jan. 28. Eighth Air Force activated at Savannah, Ga., with 74 officers and 81 enlisted men. Col. Asa N. Duncan, commanding.

May 2. Maj. Gen. Carl Spaatz assumes command Eighth Air Force; Brig. Gen. Ira C. Eaker named C.G. of VIII Bomber Command.

May 10. First unit of Eighth (39 officers, 348 men) arrives in UK.

July 4. First action seen by American air unit in ETO as six Bostons take off in joint mission with RAF to bomb airfields in Holland.

Aug. 17. First Eighth AAF heavy-bomber mission over occupied Europe by 12 Flying Fortresses attacking rail yards at Rouen, France.

Dec. 1. Maj. Gen. Eaker becomes C.G. of the Eighth, replacing Spaatz.

1943

Jan. 27. First U.S. bombing of Germany as Forts hit Wilhelmshaven and Emden.

Aug. 1. B-24 Liberators attack oil refineries in Ploesti, Rumania.

Aug. 17. First large-scale U.S. shuttle mission. Forts bomb Regensburg aircraft plant and fly to North African bases. Schweinfurt ball-bearings plants hit same day. 60 bombers lost, most of them to German fighters.

1944

Jan. 6. Maj. Gen. James H. Doolittle is named Commanding General of the Eighth.

Feb. 20 to 26. Five days of devastation to aircraft plants.

Mar. 3. First Eighth Air Force planes (P-38s) over Berlin.

Mar. 4. First U.S. bomber attack on Berlin.

June. More than 54,000 bomber and fighter sorties flown and more than 60,000 tons of bombs dropped in tactical and strategic support of the Allied Liberation of the Continent.

June 21. First England-to-Russia shuttle mission.

Sept. 17. 230 flak positions silenced and 904 enemy planes destroyed in month in support of airborne landings in Holland.

Dec. 24. More than 2,000 Forts and Libs, escorted by more than 900 fighters, hit enemy rail and communications targets in largest single bombing mission yet flown by one Air Force.

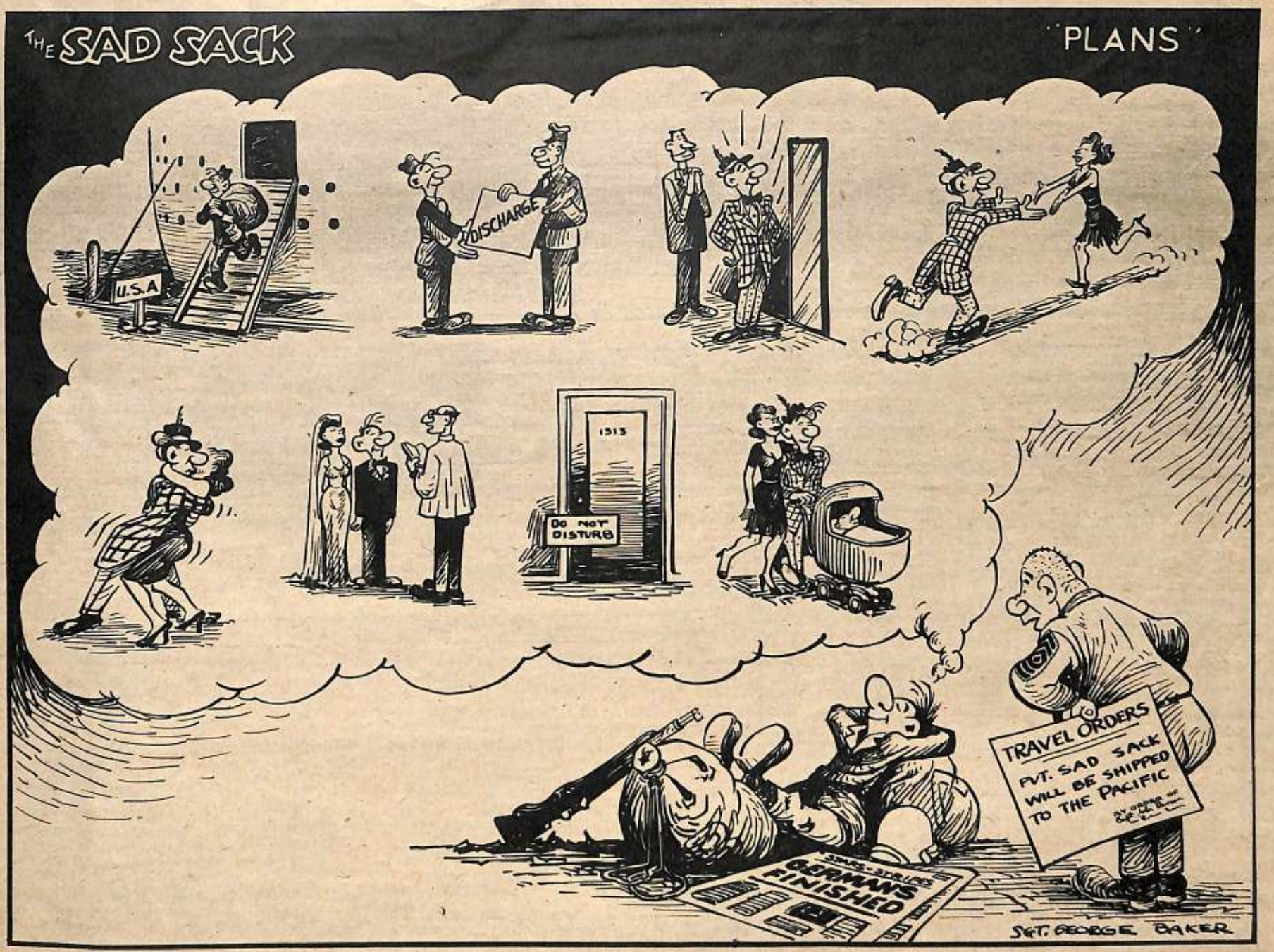
1945

Jan. 14. 161 Germans shot out of the air in the greatest single day's victory by Eighth fighters.

Feb. 22. 1,400 heavy bombers of the Eighth hit more than two dozen rail targets as part of coordinated air blow against German communications.

Mar. 24. Eighth flies 3,000 bomber and fighter sorties in support of airborne landings east of Rhine.

Apr. 30. Eighth fighter planes make new record for enemy aircraft destroyed in one month—1,786 on the ground, 148 in the air. Totals for war reach 9,437 enemy aircraft destroyed by fighters, 9,074 destroyed or damaged by bombers.



YANK
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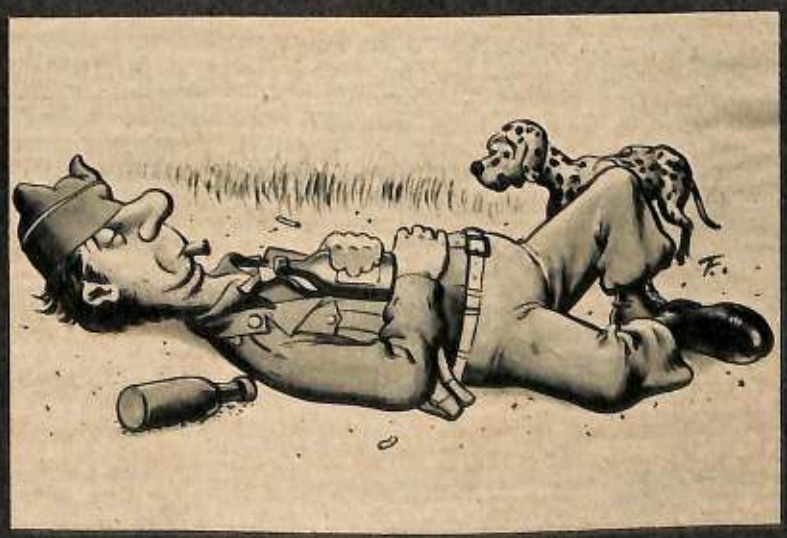
The COVER

The cover was specially executed in oils for YANK by T/Sgt. David Lax, who went from the U.K. to France with the Transportation Corps. Other Lax paintings hang in the Corcoran Gallery of Art, the Detroit Museum and the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Picture credits for this issue: Yank staff, Signal Corps, Air Forces, Coast Guard, Acme, PA, INP.



THE COUNT

MAYBE you're expecting that ex-T/5 military expert known as the Count to come across this week with a few well-chosen words of wisdom concerning the victory toward which he has striven with such self-sacrifice and unflagging zeal. If so, you're up the creek.

Not that we didn't try. As soon as we heard the good news, we called up the Count to tell him that we'd be out to see him and, in rather a thick voice, he said to hurry. Unfortunately, our train was 20 minutes late and the Count, it seemed, had been unable to wait. Out back behind his hut we found him—tight as a coot, soused in oblivion.

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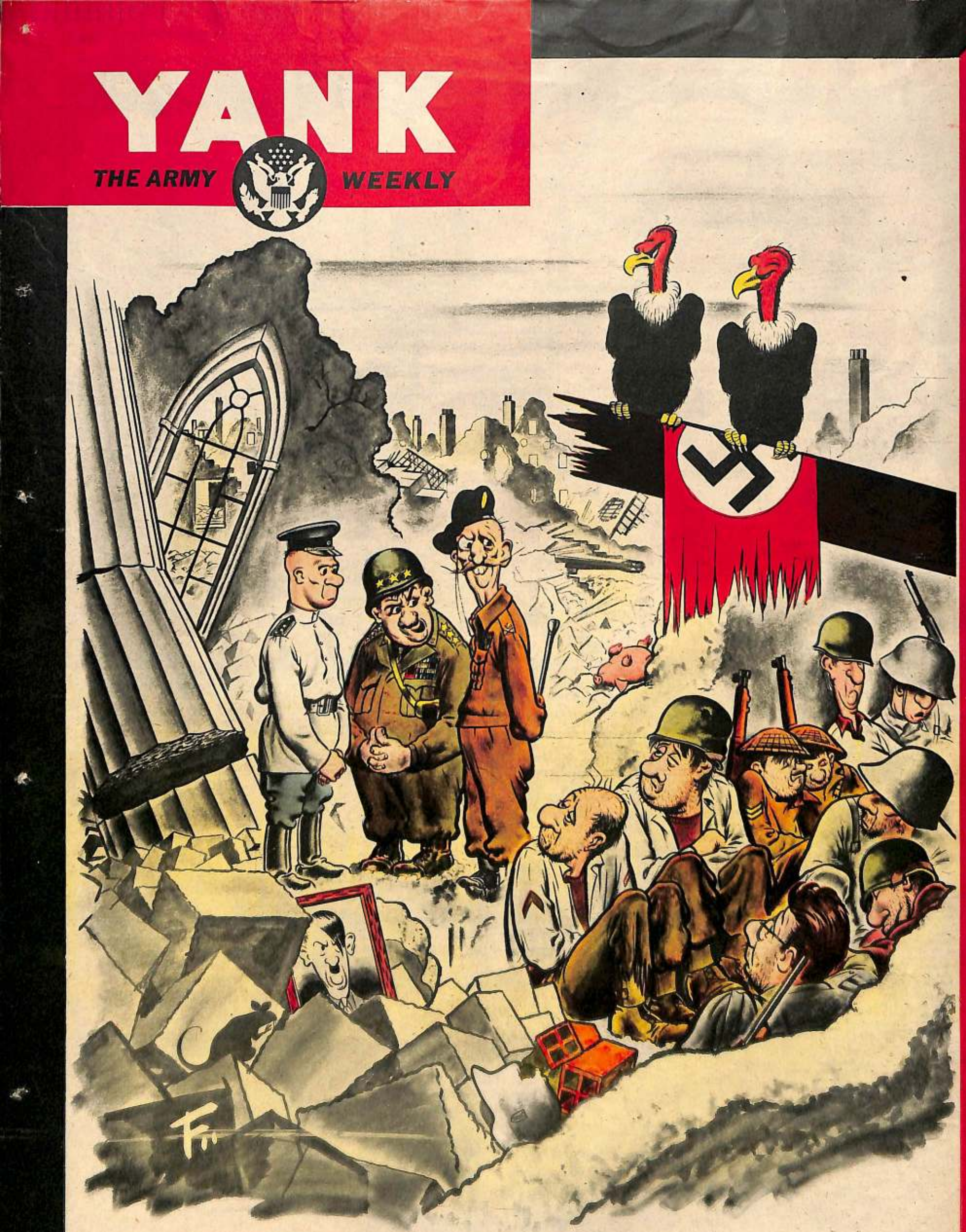

"ALL RIGHT, MEN, YOU'VE HAD YOUR BREAK—NOW POLICE UP THE AREA!"
—Sgt. Frank Burke and Pfc. Tom Flannery