

Lone US Tank Fights Off 10 of Nazis' To Save Column, Ruins 4

By HAROLD V. BOYLE

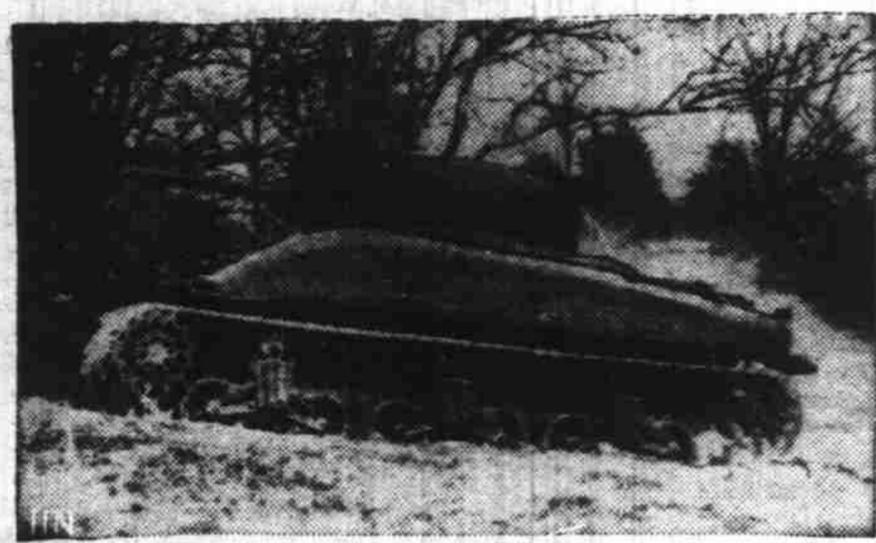
WITH THE AMERICAN ARMY IN SOUTHERN TUNISIA Feb. 16—(Delayed) (AP)—A lone General Sherman tank bold on a last-ditch, running fight with 10 German tanks in save an American column of light vehicles from destruction and destroyed four Mark IVs before the crew was forced to leave their own shell-riddled and flaming tank.

Their act, which, in one soldier's estimate, saved American lives, was hailed by officers and men alike as the most gallant engagements of the African war.

The tank, which single-handedly fought a German column, including one giant 52-ton Mark VI to a standstill, was named "The Texas" and the battle it put up against hopeless odds was a little Alamo—but with every American emerging alive.

The action took place February 14 when American forces outnumbered more than two to one, tangled with more than 100 German tanks in the greatest battle of its kind in Tunisia.

The US tanks suffered severe losses in both men and equipment, but inflicted equal or greater damage on the German foe, and kept



Destruction on tracks is the M-4, or General Sherman, tank shown above. One of these models engaged in a running fray with ten German tanks in the American withdrawal in southern Tunisia, stopping four of them, including one Mark VI, a heavy type just put into use by the nazis. The accompanying story depicts the battle.

the nazis from spreading through the entire Faid valley. The commander of the embattled "Texas" is Lt. Col. Louis V. Hightower, 34, native of Winnsboro, Tex., whose wife lives at Allentown, Pa. Hightower, who would rather fight than talk about it, had to be questioned over a two-hour period before he would give details of the battle.

"The credit for the score we chalked up belongs to our gunner, Cpl. Austin H. Eaver, of La Porte, Ind.," he said. "We pulled out about 7 o'clock that morning while about 30 tanks were attacking us at a hill called Djebel Lessouda not far from Faid."

50 Tanks Included Giants

"When we got there, 15 Mark IVs were ahead of us and 22 more on the crest to the left.

"We sat there and shot at them, knocked out about five or six while losing three ourselves. Then the 22 tanks came over the hill toward us and turned out to be 50, including at least four of their giant Mark VIs which so far as I know have never been in action on any front before.

"We drew back to cover as they tried their usual trick of envelopment. We kept pivoting back and shooting at first one German flank and then the other. We kept from being surrounded, but at a heavy cost—then their dive bombers caught us, coming over in wave after wave.

"They didn't hurt us much, but smoked us up so we couldn't see through the dust. We pulled across two miles of open field into Sidj Bouzid with our artillery covering us by using their 105 millimeter howitzers for direct fire.

"They were hitting German tanks at every pop. I saw three go up in flames with just three puffs.

"We reorganized in the town but after two hours they began another huge double envelopment. We got our artillery and two supply trains safely out, and then started down the road to Gafsa ourselves.

Hit by Many Shells

"One shell fragment came right down the tube of our gun but caused no serious injury among our crew. Another shell went through the bogie wheels and under the tank, tearing out the other side like a rabbit. Another hit our turret but didn't penetrate. Then a shell struck our suspension system.

"Each shell hitting sounded like a giant anvil or tremendous bell. It made your ears ring. As soon as our gun was unjammed we began firing again but another shell mashed the bottom of our left rear gas tank and flaming gasoline spouted over the back of our tank, its tracks, and on the ground about us.

"The guns on the other medium tank were jammed and since the light tanks were too thinly armored for the task before us, I sent all three away and signalled the column of our light vehicles to swing behind the Texas.

"As the Germans turned in for what they thought was a picnic, we let go and struck the commander's tank with our third shot, stopping him as cold as if he had hit a tree.

"We got a second tank with one shot.

"The eight remaining nazi tanks then braked to a stop, but we kept going at about 14 miles an hour, firing steadily as we pulled away. We hit one tank three times before discovering that it was a Mark VI. I saw the last shell burst against him but don't know whether he was disabled. However, he didn't fire any more.

"As another Mark IV came up to him, we hit it at the same range with one shot. It went through the turret and the tank broke into flame like a flower.

Dodged Away When Wrecked

"Another Mark IV approached the burned tank—which was stupid because we had only to bring over our gun a hair—and he flamed up with our first shot. Then our gun momentarily jammed as the five remaining Mark IVs really opened up on us.

"I shouted to my boys: 'Now is the time to git.' We boiled out of there like peas from a hot pod before the tank had stopped running. We dodged behind the tank and kept it between us and the Germans. After walking a couple of miles we fixed up a half-track, we found abandoned, picked up a soldier with a broken hip nearby, loaded him in and drove on.

"We came to another tank which some of our fellows were about to destroy because of engine trouble. We put it back in shape. Our crew got in and we picked up our convoy of half-tracks and jeeps and came on home.

The other members of the tank crew included Sgt. Mirtenwerk, 28, driver, of Ottawa, Kan., who said "I just drove a big zig-zaggy when they let go at us"; Pvt. Earl Agie, 24, gun loader from Farmington, Ark.; Warrant Officer O. W. Coley, 33, battalion radio officer from Lewood, W. Va.

Effort Saved Men, Equipment

"Colonel Hightower saved at least 300 men and much of our equipment because the German tanks had already opened up on our column and their armor was too heavy for anything we had," said Tech. Sgt. Harry E. Pursley, 25, of Akron, Ohio, who was in one of the half-tracks.

"Another thing—he knocked those tanks out with high explosive ammunition, because he was out of armor-piercing stuff. That in itself is one for the books."

"All our men would gladly follow Colonel Hightower through hell and high water—and that's putting it mildly," said Private Harry M. Bennett, 20, of Johnson City, N.Y.

"Yeah," said Technician John M. Preston, Pasadena, Calif. "If the colonel went out to bid the devil good morning this whole gang would go along to say howdy, too."

Reds Sweep Into Ukraine Cities

Transfer Of Milk Signed

New Control Setup Not Solved in Bill; Tax Paying Changes

By RALPH C. CURTIS

Transfer of milk control to the state department of agriculture, completed in so far as the legislature is concerned Saturday when Gov. Earl Snell signed the bill previously unanimously by both houses, raises several interesting questions, not least of which is the choice of a new director for the already sizable department which will become, with the acquisition of these new duties, not only larger but livelier—politically speaking—and more difficult to administer.

Though "he asked for it" in his inaugural message, it's just possible that, as Gov. Snell signed the bill with his right hand, he reached for an aspirin with his left.

Heretofore milk control has been carried on by a board of three citizens appointed by the governor, and an administrator selected by the board. Though the milk control act has been a bone of contention, the board and administrator have absorbed most of the jolts and bumps incident to policy-making and enforcement, and have "dug in" behind rather well-established precedents.

Transfer to the agriculture department will look like a "new deal" to the various factions affected by milk control, and there

LEGISLATIVE CALENDAR

Third readings Monday:
In House: HB 108, SB 90, 130, 164, 177, 183, 217.
In Senate: SB 150, 200, 168, 197, 206, 212, 220, 221, 228, 231, 243; 44. HB 277, 137, 245, 238.

will be a scramble for advantageous positions. As close observers of the legislature have observed in recent days, there is sharp division between organized dairymen and independents.

Just how the milk control organization is to be incorporated into the agriculture department, Sen. Thomas R. Mahoney's bill prescribing the transfer does not specify. It merely changes a definition so that "milk control board" means "state department of agriculture" and repeals sections creating the board.

Though the transfer will involve no imposing mechanical difficulties, the fact remains that whereas most existing divisions of the department of agriculture perform chiefly administrative and service duties, milk control has been and likely will continue to be—unless suspended "for the (Turn to Page 2—Story A)

Minesweeper Aground, Coos

PORTLAND, Ore., Feb. 20—(AP) The 13th naval district announced Saturday night a minesweeper attached to the Coos Bay navy section base ran aground Saturday just outside the Marshfield harbor.

The announcement said: "Survivors were landed by coast guard rescue vessels and a patrol of planes surveyed the immediate waters during the rescue work. No loss of life was indicated, although a complete report is not yet available.

"Next of kin of the injured or missing will be immediately notified. Navy and army doctors were posted at South Cove where the survivors were landed."

3-A Volunteer Program Halts

WASHINGTON, Feb. 20—(AP) The war department Saturday halted acceptance of applications from 3-A selective service registrants for induction as volunteer officer candidates.

Applications now in process will be completed, the department said, and the status of volunteer officers now in service will not be changed.

The department said that under present quotas the 15,000 men on the volunteer officer candidate list represent a 10-month supply

Dried Beans, Peas and Soups Added To Rationing List; Foods Frozen This Week During Registration

WASHINGTON, Feb. 20—(AP)—Secretary of Agriculture Wickard Saturday night directed the rationing of dry edible beans, dried peas, lentils and dehydrated and dried soups along with the processed and canned vegetables and fruits to be rationed beginning March 1.

These foods were added to the ration list, Wickard said, because of "extremely heavy demands, by the American armed forces and the Russian army."

Pending start of rationing, retail stocks of these commodities were frozen Saturday night. They will not be available to consumers next week.

Wickard, the food administrator, said supplies of beans, peas, lentils and dried soups had dwindled considerably in recent weeks because of short supplies of meats and other high protein foods. Consumers turned to these vegetables at meat substitutes.

These commodities will be rationed under the new point-system ration books to be distributed next week. The point values will be determined by the office of price administration.

The office of price administration said that housewives would not be required to declare the amount of dried vegetables they have on hand at the time they make their declarations on the rationed canned goods.

While not forecasting quantities which might be available under rationing, the secretary said per capita civilian supplies of these foods for the marketing year ended next September 1, as compared with supplies in the previous marketing year, were about as follows:

School Support By State Plan

1st Bill in Hopper For New Levy; 2nd Being Drafted

The first half of the "permanent support for schools" program which the house taxation and revenue committee of the Oregon legislature is devising was visible on Saturday, when the first of two related bills was introduced. They are to be submitted to a vote of the people, if the legislature gives its sanction.

This first bill would create a new tax levy—theoretically a property tax levy, though it would be offset by surplus income or excise tax funds if any were available—in the amount of \$36 a year for every child on the state school census. The present two-mill elementary school tax would be eliminated, and so would the transfer of "income tax surplus" as such, as provided in legislation which the house passed last week.

Under the terms of the bill which is yet to appear, it is understood that an elective board in each county would be created to allocate this state support money and, in order to safeguard the distribution, exercise some supervisory over district budgets.

Committee members said the proposed "optional community property law" measure which is being drafted at their request also may be ready for introduction Monday or Tuesday.

British Hold Firm On Gandhi Prison

NEW DELHI, Feb. 20—(AP)—The British government Saturday reiterated its position that the responsibility for Mohandas K. Gandhi's hunger strike rested solely with him and that any decision to end it must be made by the Indian nationalist leader himself.

As the 73-year-old Gandhi completed the 11th day of his 21-day fast in the guarded palace of the Aga Khan at Poona, the government issued a communique in Bombay saying that his condition had changed considerably for the worse and was regarded as grave.

(In Washington, Secretary of State Hull conferred with British Ambassador Lord Halifax and expressed American concern over the situation in India, but correspondents were given to understand it in no way meant American intervention.)

Dried beans, 7 and 8.8 pounds; dried peas and lentils, 0.9 and 1.2 pounds; dehydrated soups 0.3 and 0.3 pounds.

Under Wickard's directive to the OPA, dried edible beans and peas of all classes and varieties will be rationed. The dehydrated and dried soups include all types such as vegetable, tomato, corn, potato, onion, cabbage, borst, dry cheese, noodles and meat or chicken combinations, beans, pea, soy bean, meat or poultry, bouillon cubes, or any dry or hydrated soup made of a combination of

Here's How To Obtain Ration Book

For thousands of Salem home-makers who some time this week will register for war ration book No. 2, to be used in purchase of specified processed foods and later in buying meats, these facts have been gathered from rationing board and school officials by The Statesman as a guide:

1. Registrations are to be made on the consumer declaration form printed in a newspaper. You may clip that on page 14 of today's Statesman. Be sure that it is completely filled out. More readable results will be obtained with sharp, soft-leaded pencil or typewriter than if use of ink is attempted.

2. Consumer declarations are to be filed this week preferably on the day set aside for persons whose last names begin with the same letter as does yours:

Monday, A-C, inclusive.
Tuesday, D-H.
Wednesday, I-M.
Thursday, N-S.
Friday, S-Z.

No registrations are to be taken Saturday.

3. They are to be filed between the hours of 3 and 9 p. m. at your nearest elementary school building. If you are unfamiliar with the city, select it from this list:

Bush, University and Mission streets.
Englewood, 19th and Nebraska streets.
Garfield, Cottage and Marion streets.
Grant, Cottage and Market streets.
Highland, Fifth street and Highland avenue.
McKinley, end of South High street.
Richmond, Richmond avenue and Hill street.
Washington, Center and 12th street.

4. Take with you every war ration book No. 1 which has been issued to any member of your household. City school teachers, who once again are handling free of all charge the registration, are required to check those books against the numbers you have written on your declarations.

Demand Grows To Limit Army To Food-Size

WASHINGTON, Feb. 20—(AP) Farm state congressmen, not entirely appeased by a White House agreement that troops might help harvest crops, pressed demands Saturday for a limited army with Senator Bankhead (D-Ala.) saying its size must be tailored to fit food and munitions production.

That would be "the common sense, practical solution of our manpower problem," Bankhead said in a radio address.

Similarly, Senator Bushfield (R-S.D.) declared the war and agriculture departments must get together and limit the armed forces to a size American farms can feed.

On the other side of the capital the house minority committee formally reported the Kilday bill, which war department officials opposed, to give-family men mandatory draft deferment and put draft quotas on a statewide basis. Bankhead, who talked with the president Friday, announced that he would proceed with his two bills, one providing compulsory deferment of farm labor and the other directing compulsory fur-roughs until January, 1944, of all experienced farm hands now in uniform and stationed in the United States.

any of these products or other ingredients.

Wickard recommended that the OPA, in determining point values for the new items to be rationed, give consideration to establishing point values for the dried soups at relatively low levels. No steps should be taken, he said, which would discourage the maximum practical explanation in the production of this type of food, and especially those with a soy bean base.

Wickard said the production of dried beans and peas in 1942 exceeded all previous records. However, nearly half the supply of dried beans available for consumption during the current year and almost two-thirds of the supply of dried peas will be needed, he said, by US military forces and allied nations. Russia alone, he said, needs 500,000,000 pounds or about one-fifth of the total supply of beans.

Anticipating even greater military and civilian demands during the next marketing year, Wickard recently increased 1943 farm production goals of beans from 2,800,000 to 3,300,000 acres, and dried peas from 665,000 to 725,000 acres. Last year 2,376,000 acres were planted to beans and 530,000 to peas.

With the dried vegetables embraced in Saturday night's order, the rationing program now includes canned and frozen fruits and vegetables, canned soups and canned baby foods (except cereal). The sale of fresh fruits and vegetables and other foods will remain unrestricted.

Registration for the new rationing books will start on Monday.

US Employes Draft-Headed

Committee Suggests Fewer Deferments, End Overlapping

WASHINGTON, Feb. 20—(AP)—A special presidential committee reported Saturday that thousands of able-bodied men at government desks can be released to the armed forces if deferments are strictly limited to holders of essential jobs and needless and overlapping functions and positions eliminated.

The committee, composed of the Paul Bellamy, editor of the Cleveland Plain Dealer, chairman; Eric Johnston, president of the chamber of commerce of the United States, and Orday Tead, member of the New York City board of higher education, was appointed December 15 to formulate a general policy to govern draft deferment of federal employes. President Roosevelt probably will issue an order soon embodying the main features of the report.

The committee concluded that work clearly essential to the war effort or necessary to maintaining the indispensable civilian government services should be the test for deferment.

Declaring that the federal service "is not a draft evader's paradise as has been loosely charged," the committee recommended that each federal agency set up a special committee to determine de-

Many Interned Gain Release

ALLIED HEADQUARTERS IN NORTH AFRICA, Feb. 20—(AP) Gen. Jean Marie Bergeret, deputy French civil and military commander in chief, announced Saturday night that 5000 political prisoners still interned in north Africa, would be released or repatriated within two months.

"No De Dualists are now held in the camps," he said, "all have been given their liberty. There were about 20 of them."

Of the 7000 persons interned when the allies landed in north Africa last November, 200 French nationals and about 1100 foreigners have been freed, he said.

At present there are 3000 Spanish republican refugees in the camps. "The commission has decided to allow all those approved by the allied military securities service to accept work in army labor units under the same conditions as French citizens," he said. "They will be free also to accept work in private economic pursuits."

Fall of Pavlograd Brings Big Power Site Into Range

Tunisian Tide Turned; New Thrust Held

Alexander Directs Forces; 8th Army Imperils Port

ALLIED HEADQUARTERS IN NORTH AFRICA, Feb. 20—(AP)—Military authorities said Saturday the "tide has turned" in Tunisia after American and British troops hurled back Marshal Rommel's renewed thrust toward the Algerian base of Tebessa in mountain passes near Sbeitla and Kasserine.

Gen. Sir Harold Alexander, guiding genius of the British Eighth army's unparalleled 1600 mile advance from the approaches of Alexandria to the outposts of the Mareth line, took personal command of all allied ground forces in Tunisia under Gen. Eisenhower. He started organization of the supreme offensive to throw the quarter-million axis troops into the Mediterranean.

Reports that the Eighth army was about 40 miles south of Gabes and had captured the island of Djerba, 35 miles across the Gulf of Gabes to the east, put allied power and British naval power so close to that port that it was believed, Gabes was no longer of any use to the axis as a supply base for naval forces entrenched in the Mareth line.

Sfax, a good 90 miles to the north, now is the main supply port and this is within easy reach of allied bombers, both from the western side and from the Eighth army front.

Allied forces in forward positions of the Ousseltia valley below Robaa were withdrawn from the eastern to a western line of hills, because their position became untenable after the Americans were forced back further south.

The British Eighth army sent curtains of artillery shells into German positions approaching the Mareth line in the Medenine area and were in contact with the enemy there. British patrol sparred with the foe 30 miles south in the Fom Tatahouine area. Dust storms hampered this powerful allied arm some 65 miles inside southern Tunisia from Libya.

Marshal Rommel sent a strong patrol against an allied brigade in the Siba region, 20 miles north of Sbeitla, and also attacked US forces guarding the Kasserine gap, an allied spokesman said. At Siba, the Germans were said to have lost six tanks and six self-propelled guns. The spokesman said enemy losses were even heavier at the Kasserine pass.

Snow, rain and gales swept most of Tunisia, grounding virtually all planes.

RAF Slashes Wilhelmshaven

LONDON, Feb. 20—(AP) The heavyweights of the RAF, flying again by the light of a full moon and with a large bomber complement of the Royal Canadian Air Force, dealt the second successive night blow on Wilhelmshaven Friday night, laying a fiery carpet of destruction on U-boat lairs and shipyards in a 30-minute saturation raid.

The bright night brought out strong fighter opposition on this and companion raids on western Germany but ground defenses at Wilhelmshaven were reported comparatively feeble—apparently because of the bashing they took on the preceding night.

Eleven bombers were lost and one enemy fighter was destroyed in the aerial tangles suggested by the account of one Halifax bomber pilot who said:

"There seemed to be bombers wherever you looked and fighters weaving here and there among them."

It was Wilhelmshaven's 72nd raid and the bomber command's 13th night attack on Germany proper in the last 19 days.

Krasnograd Rail Hub Taken by Vatutin; Caucasus Pressed

By The Associated Press

Russian forces drove through the thawing Ukrainian ice fields to within 36 miles of the big power site of Dnieperopetrovsk on the Dnieper river Saturday night by capturing the major rail junction of Pavlograd while another soviet column scooped up Krasnograd, 60 miles southwest of Kharkov.

Both cities were captured by the superb army of Gen. N. F. Vatutin which earlier had seized Lovozova. His main force appeared to be striking southwest toward the Sea of Azov to envelop the sorely beset Germans striving to escape the Russian fury in the Donets basin.

Krasnograd is a junction of railways leading from Kharkov into the Dnieper basin and from Salyansk to the Ukrainian capital of Kiev. Pavlograd is on the Kharkov-Crimea line and only 40 miles from the big German base of Poltava. Advancing west of Kharkov the Russians were less than 218 miles from Kiev.

In the Caucasus, the Russians drove spearheads deeper into the narrowing sector around Novorossisk where the German invaders are pocketed, capturing Izkaya, 22 miles southwest of Krasnodar, and Novomishastovskaya, 20 miles to the northwest, said the midnight communique as recorded by the soviet Monitor. Izkaya is only 40 miles east of Novorossisk on the Black sea coast.

West of Rostov the Russians rolled forward, capturing "a number" of populated places and huge quantities of war material, including 600 trucks, 48 locomotives, 3984 railway cars, 108 wagons with ammunition, German planes parked on airfields, the midnight communique declared.

By taking Pavlograd the Russians were only 20 miles from Sineelnikovo, a rail junction whose seizure would cut off thousands of German troops fleeing out of the Donets basin via Stalin.

Japs Blasted Across Whole Pacific Area

By The Associated Press

By sea, air and land the Japanese were smitten Saturday over a wide expanse from bleak Attu island in the Aleutians off Alaska, through China to the Solomons and Burma. A navy flotilla bombarded the enemy at Attu but fog obscured the results.

Allied heavy and medium smashed again at Buin on Bougainville island and Faisi in the north Solomons, dropping 23 tons of bombs on airfields at Kahill and Baillale and the seaplane base at Faisi, a communique from allied headquarters in Australia declared Sunday.

The hail of bombs destroyed grounded enemy aircraft, and smashed into fuel and ammunition dumps, starting enormous fires and sending smoke more than a mile high. The harbor was deserted of shipping, apparently cleaned out after previous attacks, and no Japanese planes gave battle, the communique added.

It was the third raid in three days on Buin, where allied bombers started fires Thursday and sank four enemy merchant ships with total tonnage of 27,000 tons Friday.

Tokyo made the wholly unconfirmed claim of sinking two destroyers and a large transport off San Cristobal island, south of Guadalcanal.

The Chinese twice frustrated Japanese attempts to cross the Salween river in western Yunnan province and were reported counter-attacking continually in northern Kiangsu. The Japanese won Hohong and Suichi in Kwangtung in south China. American planes teamed up with the RAF to batter Japanese headquarters in northern Burma at Mankwan, troop concentrations and another Japanese field headquarters.