

Serving Uncle Sam

Edited by Margaret Magee

While others of Uncle Sam's soldiers are marching in on the Germans, Tech. 5 Robert H. Eckley drops in on them from the sky and hopes to take them by surprise. When the ground troops were crossing the Rhine on barges and bridges, Eckley, son of Mr. and Mrs. Junior Eckley, boarded a plane, hopped across the Rhine and then dropped down with enough equipment to attack the Nazis.

The technician, a member of the 17th Airborne division, is not one of those who fears the consequences of the number 13, but rather believes it to be his lucky number. The Rhine jump was his 13th jump and he traded planes with the man ahead of him so that he could be the 13th man to jump from his plane, which was the second in the formation.

Telling of his jump across the Rhine Eckley says: "We were taken from the rest camp by army van to a railroad station, where we boarded box cars with our equipment and had a cold ride for 24 hours to a town. We got there about 3 or 4 a. m. and were again loaded onto truck vans and taken to

'an airport.' There we spent a few days getting ready for the big thing: being briefed, looking at maps of the area we were to jump into and really going down to fine details. We were told our expected opposition and knew the whole score.

"Finally 'D' day came, March 24, and we got up awfully early and started getting ready for our big experience. We went out to the planes and made our last minute preparations, putting on our equipment and parachutes. We entered the big C-46's (first ones to ever be used in an airborne operation) and took off about 'blank' o'clock in the morning.

"The planes circled around until all were off the air port and into formation, then we hit into an asmet toward our drop zone. Finally our crew began putting on their flak suits and we knew we were getting near to our objective. Previous to this, around a half hour from the Rhine, huge formations of English gliders and planes came in from our left to assist in our spearhead. The sky was filled as far as you could see with planes and gliders, all heading toward Germany. Then we got the word from the pilot to stand up. We did so, checking our equipment for the last time. Suddenly we got the green light and there was a mad scramble for the door."

In telling of the drop the Salem man said that flak filled the sky with the German machine guns firing like water spurting from a hose and that a sort of smoky haze covered the ground where the artillery was making black dugouts all over the green pastures.

On hitting the ground Eckley said that he rolled over on his back and looked up into the air where he could see the C-46's still unloading troops and gliders being cut loose and starting their descent. The gliders were followed all the way down by flak, some being hit, others crashing into barns, trees, house and power lines and still others coming in for a three point landing with no tails, wings ripped off, the sides out of them and the hulks filled with holes. Men, however, were still jumping out of them and on landing started taking charge of the situation. Also landed were light British airborne tanks, jeeps, motor cycles, field guns and other equipment. Forced to make a crash landing were two of the C-46's that were on fire.

According to the Salem paratrooper the Germans were expecting the airborne army, as they had positions already dug in the drop zones for miles around. At the time of the landings, however, they were not in them, but in farm houses lazing around writing home, shaving and relaxing.

With the Nazis caught unawares, the doughboys and the British had within an hour or so cleaned out the positions and the houses and had taken a few hundred prisoners, as well of the enemy's ack-ack batteries, artillery, trucks, motorcycles and other equipment.

With most of the opposition in the area wiped out the allies were within a short time using the prisoners and captured vehicles to their advantage. Equipment bundles were picked up and after putting up the hospital tents and doing other rough jobs they drove on to their objective from where they spearheaded the drive.

Lt. and Mrs. George Neuner Jr., who have been spending the past week at the home of her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Jay Peck, in Astoria, returned home on Thursday. Lt. Neuner's fleet unit, with which he has been serving for more than a year on the southwest Pacific, is now at a Pacific coast port. Mrs. Neuner is making her home here while he is in the naval service.

Jefferson—Mr. and Mrs. T. P. Harris have received four letters from their son, Pvt. Arthur Harris, since he has been in a German prison camp. He is working in a sawmill there, and has been in the prison camp for almost two months. Another son, Pithlynn Harris, AMMIC, who has been in the service over four years, left for overseas duty early in March, from Point Mugu, Calif. He is machinist mate with the ground crew.

Mr. and Mrs. A. Wilson have received word that their son Clarence Wilson, SOM3C, who was stationed at Dearborn, Mich., for a short time after over two years of overseas service, now is at the receiving ship, general detail, San Francisco, Calif.



Robert Lloyd Riches (left), son of Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd T. Riches of Salem and Joseph Raymond Bittler (right), son of Mr. and Mrs. Ben Bittler of Mt. Angel, who were among those completing their bombardier training at the Carlsbad, New Mexico, army air field, April 19. Riches was commissioned a flight officer and Bittler, a second lieutenant. (Air corps photo.)

41st Infantry Division Takes 136,200 Square Miles

Hq., 41st Infantry Division, the Philippines—In a combat-crowded total of 34 historic days the 41st infantry division has swept the Japanese forever from an area of 136,000 square miles rectangular across the western and southwestern approaches to the Philippines.

In a large sense, the gains scored during these jack-hammer drives are as sensational as any yet achieved in the Pacific war by a single division in a limited time, for by accomplishing four distinct and resounding successful amphibious operations in 34 days, the 41st has established a record unequalled in World War II.

The first of the series of lightning lunges made by the veterans of three years of overseas service was arrowed at string-bean-shaped Palawan, western-most isle of the Philippines. The strike, on February 28, rocked the Japanese by surprise and the island was conquered. A second punch, directed by Maj. Gen. Jens A. Doe, himself, was the initial invasion of Mindanao. Landing in the teeth of determined opposition, the 41st staved in stout enemy defenses



Walter Meyer Wood, son of Mr. and Mrs. J. E. Wood of 570 North 21st street, who was commissioned an ensign in the naval reserve and designated a naval aviator at exercises held recently at the naval air training base at Pensacola, Fla. (Navy photo.)

and new-broomed the Zamboanga peninsula. Accelerating the pace, an element of the division hit Basilian island, March 16, in three days completely secured it. On April 2, the 41st landed on the off-end tip of Tawitawi and seized control more rapidly than they did on Basilian.

In this four-ply push the highlights of the 41st accomplishments are: The two airdromes on Palawan are within fighter range of Indo-China and a flat 1000 miles from Singapore—the nearest allied approach to the former British bastion. From Palawan's plateau the South China sea is completely dominated, and all Japanese shipping between the homeland and fabulously rich Malaya, Java, Sumatra and Borneo automatically ceases.

The Sulu sea is now bounded entirely by 41st jungleers. Below it the Celebes sea is forever condemned as is the sprawling, windmill-shaped Celebes isle. Borneo, almost visible across the 30 miles from Tawitawi, contains 25,000 hopelessly rat-trapped troops.

On Palawan more than 1000 Nipponese were killed or scattered into the mountainous wilderness to starve. On Zamboanga a like fate was dealt and two airfields were put to U. S. use. The strong enemy force on Jolo was doomed by complete encirclement. The garrison on Tawitawi was snuffed out like a guttering candle and its two airdromes and wide naval anchorage acquired.

This 1945 series of scythe-strokes through Japan's thefted domain bests the record set last year by this division, when, within a span of 36 days the 41st broke the two-year-old Nip grip on New Guinea.

In that series of strides up 800 miles of Guinea's tangled jungle, the 41st, between April 22 and May 27, smote and sprawled the foe at Altape, Hollandia, Wakde and Blak.

Family Church Dinner Planned

Stayton—The Stayton Methodist WSCS held its monthly business meeting at the home of Mrs. Ed Schlies with Mrs. A. C. Stowell co-hostess.

Mrs. L. H. Wright, president, conducted the meeting at which it was announced the annual summer school, sponsored by the Oregon conference, would be held at Pacific university in Forest Grove, from August 19 to 24 inclusive.

This month's tea will be in the form of a missionary tea and will be held at the home of Mrs. Ross Hughes on the afternoon of April 26 with the Lyons WSCS as special guests. Mrs. William Fair and Mrs. D. George Cole will be co-hostesses. The speaker will be Allen C. Wilcox, director of religious education, Chemawa campus church, U. S. government Indian school of Chemawa. He will also speak at a covered dish dinner at 6:30 o'clock in the evening of the same day at the Methodist church for those who cannot hear him in the afternoon.

The quarterly no-host dinner will be held April 23 at 6:30 o'clock in the Methodist church basement. This is a family church dinner.

Likes Salem News

How the old home town, the products of the Willamette valley, and especially the Salem Cherrian, official publication of the Cherrians, are appreciated by the boys overseas is well expressed in a letter received by King Bing Sidney McNeil from Coxswain W. C. Hagedorn of the Seabees, dated at Samar, P. I., April 11. He writes: "I really do enjoy reading the Cherrian, because of the brief news items it carries of 'home' and of the men and women in service. You are doing a good job with the publication. Congratulations. Keep it up."

"I have been wanting to write to someone for a long time about the Salem products I have seen in the southwest Pacific and the Philippines. Our outfit has eaten many, many cans of Labish string beans, and good old Willamette valley prunes. And during my assignment in New Guinea, the Admiralty islands, and the Philippines I have seen ream after ream of Western Paper Converting company mimeograph and bond paper. If possible, pass on to Lloyd Riches of Western Paper that I recommended his firm to A. Z. Potticano of Leyte, whom he has heard from by this time, I'm sure, since I have seen the reply Mr. Riches sent back. So in a way I'm sort of a Salem Chamber of Commerce here. There will be wonderful business opportunities in the Philippines for American products after the liberation. The people here crave American merchandise.

"So once again let me thank you for your thoughtfulness in sending me the timely Cherrian. My brother, R. E. Hagedorn, GH 3/c, USS LCL 1052, FPO San Francisco, has been out in



Pfc. Robert S. Casteel, whose parents, Mr. and Mrs. R. S. Casteel, this week received word from the war department that he had been wounded in action in Germany.

Edgerton Wounded

Salem officer wounded in action in the European theater is Major Roy C. Edgerton, whose wife, the former Shirley Even-son, of 495 North Summer street, received word this week that he had been slightly wounded in action April 7, while serving with the 19th corps field artillery of the 9th army in Germany.

Edgerton, overseas since July, 1944, before entering the service was connected with the Oregon state highway commission.

Spending a two week furlough with her mother, Mrs. Alex Slater of 2349 Myrtle avenue, will be Pvt. Velma McNamara, Wac now on duty at the Seattle port of embarkation, where she is a statistical clerk in the control division of the transportation corps. Pvt. McNamara, prior to entering the Wacs in September, 1944, was a teller and bookkeeper at the Union, Oregon, branch of the First National bank.

Salem Seabee stationed in the Philippines is Seaman 2/c Glenn Orville Lewis.

The Marshalls a good many months, and would probably like to receive the Cherrian too, if possible."

Band to Play Blossom Day

Observation of Blossom day Sunday will center on the Salem high school band concert, scheduled to 3 o'clock on the west steps of the state capitol, weather permitting. The band is conducted by Vernon L. Wis-carson.

Blossoms in valley orchards are going to be at their best Sunday, and while no routes of travel have been set up on account of war restrictions on gasoline, it is expected that some motorists will use a bit of vehicle fuel for a drive about the valley.

The program for the band concert follows:
St. Julien March, Husher; Grandiose Overture, De Lamater; Rhythmic, E. Inxion; Children's March, Goldman; Swanee, Gerzwin; In a Persian Market, Ketylby; Polonaise, Simon; Clap Yo Hands, Gerzwin; Amparita Roca, Treadar.

Intermission
Bonnie March, Klein; I'm Getting Sentimental Over You, Washington; There's Something About a Soldier, Arr. Yoder; Louisiana Hayride, Dietz; Powerhouse, Scott; Stars and Stripes Forever, Sousa; Star Spangled Banner.

Pyle's Signature Stolen from Book

San Francisco, April 21. (UP)—Newspapermen of San Francisco learned Friday that the signature of the late Ernie Pyle, famous war correspondent, apparently had a great attraction for a "meanest thief."

When Pyle went through San Francisco recently to his last assignment he visited the San Francisco press club and signed the following in the club guest book, "Ernie Pyle: Destination: 'God Knows Where.'"

Today club members went to the guest book to photograph the signature for their annual magazine.

The signature has been stolen—page and all.
Seventeen-year-old Clifford J. Remington of route 3, enlisted in the marine corps April 18 and left for the San Diego "boot" camp immediately following his enlistment.

Assigned to the AAF training command radio school at

Sioux Falls army air field, Sioux Falls, S. D., for training as a radio operator is Pvt. Robert E. Erickson, son of Mr. and Mrs. Gustave S. Erickson of 1800 State street. The air corps man, a graduate of Salem high school, was with the Salem fire department before entering the service.

Meet in Europe

Stationed in Salem in the fall of 1942 as a special service officer with a unit of the 44th division, Lt. Lawrence Scheffel, who when here knew Mrs. Clifton Mudd, crossed a continent and the Atlantic ocean to meet her son, Lt. William Mudd.

Both Lt. Scheffel, with the intelligence section of the army, and Lt. Mudd, have been overseas for several months. They met April 5 when both were in Paris, Scheffel wrote to Salem friends in a letter dated April 6 and received here Friday.

Scheffel, a New Yorker, had gone to the oculist in Paris and was registering with the nurses when an officer stepped up and gave his name as Lt. Mudd. On questioning Mudd the easterner learned that he was from Salem. The two had lunch together and spent two hours with each other. Telling of the Salemite Scheffel stated that he was well decorated and mentioned that he was passing through Paris on his way back to his outfit after a leave spent in England.

Riding a General Sherman tank up the jagged rock of hill 382 on Iwo Jima and helping knock out the Japs dug in on the ridge was a marine from Salem, Sgt. James F. Snook of route 4.

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Robert H. Eckley

Writes to Cherrians

Salem officer receiving a surprise, when he opened his March copy of the Salem Cherrian was Capt. Harry Carson, the picture of whose small daughter, along with those of other Salem servicemen was published in that issue.

The captain, now stationed on Okinawa, in writing to the Cherrians, told of his appreciation of the paper, which publishes home town news for the men overseas and mentioned that the Seventh division of which he is a member had in it four Salemites, Maj. Bob Goodfellow, Lt. Bob Brownell and "a fellow named Tucker."

Carson stated that the men on the island had been undergoing terrific enemy artillery barrages lately and noted that the Japs seemed to have excellent observation and to know how to use the "stuff."

Describing the island itself, the officer pictured it as a place that could be very pleasant if it were not for the Nips. The climate was said to resemble that of Oregon in the spring, warm and clear in the day times and with just the right amount of frost at night, which to the men is a real treat after spending a long time in the tropics.

Agriculture was said to be the chief occupation in the island with the fields small, very neat and well irrigated. The principal crops are cane grains and vegetables with some livestock on the island. The natives, who have fled to the hills, were described as seemingly more docile and backward than the true Jap.

Salem Marines Home

Two Salem marines, Second Lt. Allen R. Semb and Pfc. Walter A. Rutherford, recently returned from the Pacific.

Lt. Semb, home on leave after serving as a fighter-bomber pilot with the "Flying Deuces" first marine air wing squadron, made a direct hit on a warehouse on Mindanao and strafed an airfield on that island. He also took part in bombing and strafing sweeps over Cebu and Negros and hit military objectives on Luzon. From his base on Green Island he had previously sunk two Jap barges in Simpson harbor, near Rabaul, on New Britain. Smith, who has flown 100 missions, and has logged 300 combat hours, got five more in waters near Kavieng. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Anton Semb of 946 Belmont street.

Rutherford, the son of Mrs. L. M. Rutherford, route 7, Salem, last served with the first marine division, and wears the Purple Heart ribbon for wounds received in the battle for Pelellu. He is a former student of Salem high school.

Dutch New Guinea—Second Lt. Edward W. Reindl, son of Mrs. Emmet W. Reindl of Florence, Oregon, has been awarded the Purple Heart medal for wounds received in action with General MacArthur's liberation forces near Rosario, Luzon, Philippine Islands.

HATS OFF TO RADIO!

Senator Carl A. Hatch
of New Mexico

Pays tribute to Press and Radio for the manner in which they handled the news of the death of President Roosevelt. Senator Hatch told the Senate:

"Press and radio—friend and foe alike of the previous administration—through editorial comment, through the news services, and in every possible way, rose to the occasion with a patriotism never before witnessed in any country.

"Had the communications systems been directed and controlled, as they are in many countries of the world, the tributes to the departed Commander-in-Chief and the good will expressed for the incoming president could not have shown a more united spirit than was demonstrated here in free America by concerted, purely voluntary and wholly cooperative effort inspired only by patriotic devotion to the country's welfare."

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