

TRAILER OFFICE CENTERED DEATH ON NAZI TANKS

Radio Information to and
From Control Station Cost
Foe Over 4,000 Vehicles.

By Walter Cronkite
United Press War Correspondent
Ninth Air Force Control Station,
Western Front, Jan. 22—(U.P.)—Here in a tiny trailer,
smaller than a modern kitchenette,
was unfolded the whole drama of this greatest day in the air war since 1940.

Here a telephone jangled with the first report that the Germans had dared to bunch up their transport in the longest and most vulnerable column since the Falaise Gap.

Bolts Unleashed
Here a soft-spoken young flight officer from Arizona spoke into a microphone the few words that unleashed the dread Thunderbolt fighter-bombers on the Germans.

And here, through a small loudspeaker, came back the voices of excited pilots, reporting the second by second destruction of dozens upon dozens of trucks and tanks.

The battle, exceeding any ground-air engagement yet joined in the war, was fought out under the leaden skies of the German-Luxembourg border region.

It was won back here in this little six by 10 foot trailer. For without this trailer and its one or two auxiliaries, nestled in the snow under a clump of Ardennes pine trees, those white-starred death-spitting fighters perhaps never would have found and destroyed the massed enemy.

Play By Play
Here is a play by play account of how the air force's greatest kill was made:

Somewhere out over the German lines this morning, an artillery observation patrol of Piper Cubs — little two-place sport planes that used to rattle around the airports back home — skipped in and out of the clouds looking for the enemy.

Two of the pilots, 1st Lt. Ellis E. Thompson of Fairfield, N. D., and 2nd Lt. Bernard B. Mackell of Pittsburgh, Pa., were given equal credit tonight for discovering and reporting the enemy vehicle concentration.

Off in the distance they had seen a fine snow all, such as a column of vehicles spins behind it. They flew closer to look and what they saw was almost unbelievable.

Column of Armor
There below was a column of tanks, trucks, halftracks, buses and trailers that stretched through the woods, down a dale and up and beyond a hill.

One of the pilots lifted his microphone and back at the infantry division for which he flies the radio crackled:

"There are trucks and tanks up here—millions of them," the pilot yelled. "Let's have some air quick."

From division headquarters word was relayed to the air liaison officer up in a forward observation post and he flashed word to the tactical air force. At TAC they took a quick look at the operations chart and called this fighter control station.

Flight Officer William Stephens of Glendale, Ariz., took the call. As the voice at the other end spit directions, Stephens drew on a map which coordinates all available information a heavy black circle to mark the spot where a Nazi column was doomed to die.

Stephens hung up the receiver and reached for the microphone.

"Red leader, red leader, red

leader," he called. "I have a target for you."

Planes Roar In
He gave the map coordinates and then he called in a lot of other flights—yellow flight, blue flight and green flight. Those were not their code names but they will have to do.

As the Thunderbolts roared toward the targets up above a heavy cloud layer Stephens gave directions by radio and kept them right on the track.

"You should be over the target now," he called at last. "Roger, D o d g e r," crackled back the voice of the red leader. "We're going down."

There was a minute's silence, which seemed interminable, and the loudspeaker crackled again: "This is red leader. There's plenty of stuff down there. We really let 'em have it. We're going in again to give them another dose."

That was the story throughout the day. Flight after flight was steered to the target and flight after flight crackled out success reports logging through ether the greatest day in the air war.

WORD RECEIVED ABOUT OFFICERS

Information about three officers of the 96th division, formerly at Camp White and now in the Philippine Islands, has been received here by friends.

The letter stated that Capt. Mike Stillman, who was commander of Company A, 381st regiment, was killed in action November 11 and that Lt. Paul Baumgaerdner had been wounded October 28. Lt. Baumgaerdner made his home with Mr. and Mrs. F. E. Wahl, route 3, when the division was at Camp White.

Lt. W. E. Shelley has been promoted to first lieutenant, according to the writer. Lt. and Mrs. Shelley resided at 420 1/2 South Central avenue before the division left and at present Mrs. Shelley and their small son are residing at 330 North Holly street.

4 CASES SCARLET FEVER REPORTED

New cases of both diphtheria and scarlet fever were reported in the county during the week ending January 19, the weekly report of the Jackson county health department shows. One case of diphtheria was reported in Medford and of the four cases of scarlet fever, two were reported from Prospect and one each from Jacksonville and Medford.

Two new cases of measles were listed, one in Ashland and one in Applegate, and from Camp White was reported one case of influenza, two cases of trench mouth and 14 cases of recurrent malaria. From Medford one case each of tuberculosis, chicken pox and pneumonia were reported and one case of mumps was listed at Prospect.

40 ET 8 MEMBERS WILL ATTEND ROSEBURG MEET

Members of the 40 et 8, American Legion fun chapter, are going to Roseburg Saturday afternoon to attend the inaugural meeting of the new Roseburg Volture. It is expected that the Ashland Kilty band also will attend.

Any members of the 40 et 8 who want to make the trip are asked to get in touch with C. Y. Tengwald.

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New shipment of good quality all cowhide work gloves. Main Floor. 1.79

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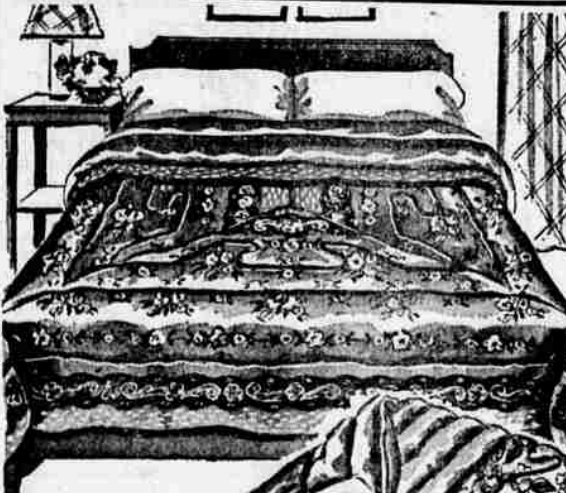


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