

Life on Guadalcanal

Sherman Montrose, Acme Newspictures cameraman, who landed with the Marines on Guadalcanal last August, and whose pictures were distributed to newspapers of the country through the "photographic pool," has just returned to San Francisco from his assignment. Montrose has written six informative, exciting stories of life on Guadalcanal. The article below is the second.

By SHERMAN MONTROSE

Written for NEA Service

SAN FRANCISCO, Dec. 14—

Henderson field on Guadalcanal

stretched out ahead of us, palm

trees sharply outlined against

the beach at sunset. It

looked much more inviting to

me than last time. I had seen

that island and beach more

than a month before, when I

landed with marines occupying

the island. Then, Japs were

lurking in palm trees—and now, Japs were still

lurking in palm trees. But we

had air superiority and control

of the airport this time, and that

was important.

This time I arrived in a trans-

port plane carrying relief fil-

ters, ammunition, and spare parts

for planes. For some hundreds

of miles we had winged over the

Pacific with only a couple of

.45's carried by officers and one

Browning automatic rifle for

protection against Zeros. But we

were pretty safe. There were

plenty of clouds that day, and

clouds are handy to hide in.

SOUVENIRS FOR CANDY

As we taxied down the run-

way and came to a halt, tough,

tropic-hardened marines gath-

ered around our ship to offer us

Jap souvenirs in exchange for

"pogie-bait"—candy. For six

weeks I'd been traveling the

South Pacific, "looking for trou-

ble," with our navy, or making

vain efforts to get back into

spots where land action was

popping.

I had found Acme Cameraman

Frank Prist in Australia, and

put him on a plane one morning

headed for Port Moresby where

the campaign against the Japs

was just getting good headway

in New Guinea.

My job, I figured, was back on

Guadalcanal. Now I was getting

back, after 20,000 miles of travel

—and I was glad to be there.

Old friends on the islands jocular-

ly hurled friendly insults.

Main theme was, "if you don't

have better sense than to come

back to the Solomons after get-

ting out safe with your hide

once, you deserve to be shot."

I noticed many changes on

Guadalcanal since my first land-

ing. Sturdy Grumman dive

bombers, Douglas scout bom-

bers, Grumman navy fighters,

and mean-looking army P-40

pursuits lined the runways of

Henderson field, or were biv-

ouacked off in the stately palms

that line its borders.

TRAFFIC WAS HEAVY

Jeeps, reconnaissance cars,

tractors and "half tracks," rolled

along roads adjacent to the air-

port; passing troops moved to

and fro on the lines where Mr.

Tojo was taking a terrific beat-

ing. The troops had changed

since we landed.

Joking was rare, and nearly

all faces were serious. For six

weeks these men had been un-

der almost continuous fire of one

type or another, and they showed

it. In six weeks hundreds of

them had grown from boys to

men—and good tough fighting

men to boot.

Their once-new green work

uniforms showed effects of con-

stant washing by the Lunga

River Laundry Co.—where you

bend your back and do your

own. Shoes were scuffed and

some helmets were scarred by

shrapnel or bullets.

But the main change was ap-

parent in the men's features.

Many were drawn, with fine

lines etched into the tropic tan.

Without telling, you knew these

men had been through some

days and nights of hell, but that

it hadn't bested their spirits.

Other correspondents greeted

me at their new "Press Club,"

anxiously inquiring about the

world "outside." Since I hadn't

been "outside" myself there was

little to tell them. Other cor-

respondents had been in and out

several times, but none had

eclipsed the six-week record on

the island established by Bob

Miller of United Press and Dick

Tregadis of INS.

FIRST-DAY EXCITEMENT

Francis McCarthy of UP and

Jack Dowling of the Chicago

Sun were then the "regulars."

For excitement the opening

day, we decided to get in on the

opening rounds of clearing up a

situation on the Mantankou

river where an estimated 1500

newly-landed Japanese troops

constituted a menace.

We gave them hell on the Ma-

tanikou that day and another,

but the Nips were well en-

trenched and our best efforts,

on the scale we planned the job,

were not good enough. A week

later we threw the book at them

and results of that battle are

well known at home.

ADD Copyright Story with cut

During those first two days, I

saw jungle action of the rough-

est type and how marines per-

form when the going is the

toughest. We were outnumbered

and out-gunned by the enemy

but their losses were far heavier

than ours.

The next time we went back

to clean them out, we really did

it, and I never shall forget the

sight of Gen. Arthur Vandegrift

and Col. Merritt Edson plan-

ning attack strategy far out

ly, but no voice was raised in

protest.

In the South Pacific the men

doing the fighting—and this in-

cludes members of the Marine

Corps, the navy, the Coast

Guard and the army—want the

folks at home to know that the

Japs are pretty good. Pretty

good, yes. But in the air, on the

sea and on land—ship for ship,

plane for plane, tank for tank,

man for man—we're better.

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Out Our Way By J. R. Williams



Red Ryder



Little Orphan Annie



Freddie and His Friends



Wash Tubbs



Boots and Her Buddies



Alley Oop



Our Boarding House With Major Hoople



Harold Gray



By Harold Gray



By Blosser



By Crane



By Martin

