

Major Martin Adams Tells Commandos of Life, War in Sicily With Paratroopers

(COMMANDO NEWS)
By LOIS BERRUYS

Major J. Martin Adams, a local physician and surgeon until he was called into the army in December 1940, spoke before the Commando unit Wednesday, September 22. He returned to Klamath Falls, on furlough, Saturday, September 18, after 14 months duty in England, Africa, and Sicily. Major Adams' trip from Sicily to Klamath Falls, by Clipper, took eight days and 62 hours of flying time.

Major Adams talked for 1 1/2 hours in his easy, direct, witty, sincere manner. When he had finished his speech, had answered many questions, each Commando realized more clearly the importance and necessity of the maintenance of their servicemen's center—and the project of bringing wounded men to Klamath Falls. He stressed the hardships experienced by fighting men when in the battle zones and reiterated several times how letters and pictures from home stimulated the morale of men overseas.

In England
On August 7, 1942, Major Adams left the United States in a troop carrier unit of 52 planes for overseas duty. The entire unit of 52 planes landed safely in England after crossing the Atlantic. Major Adams accompanied this unit as a flight surgeon to take care of pilots. In each one of these planes, leaving the states, were boys from 18 to 25 trained for combat—and they were badly needed overseas.

There was a pilot, co-pilot, navigator, crew chief, radio operator and about 18 additional men in each plane.

This unit flew from Maine into Labrador, then to Iceland, Greenland, and on to England. They were stationed in England until November when they flew to Africa on the original invasion dropping paratroopers. This unit of planes acted as carriers of freight, personnel and wounded in Africa. They hauled freight into the front lines within easy range of German pursuit—often without protection. They went through the Tunisia campaign and cleaned up in May of this year. They carried many German and Italian prisoners during these campaigns.

Live Rough
"In battle you have to go where the enemy is and it is naturally the worst places. Our men live pretty rough at these times," said Major Adams regarding the Tunisia campaign. "Disease is all around—and there is constant diarrhea. Malaria and yellow fever are prevalent." He told of the top temperature being around 132 degrees on the desert. The men lived in tents and some had stretchers and cots to sleep on—but mostly they had just bed rolls laid out on the hard ground. The heat was so intense during the day it was practically impossible to work between 9 a. m. and 5 p. m. They mostly rested on their beds during this part of the day—as it was so hot one could hardly breathe. "You would lie on your

bed and within an hour you would be lying in an inch of water—water from your own body," continued Major Adams. "Flies and mosquitoes are in swarms like bees in this country. When the army moves into new quarters they are usually dirty and if previously occupied there are bed bugs and lice present. However, it doesn't take the American soldier long to clean things up. Water is a problem in many of the places the army moves. Even though the water is rationed—our soldiers some way manage to get baths, improvise showers, etc."

Hungry for Fruit
When the unit of Dr. Adams moved into Sicily the men were hungry for fresh fruit. They had been living on "C" rations. The planes landed close to a vineyard full of ripe grapes. They jumped from their plane and each man ate bunch after bunch of grapes. Dr. Adams said, "After I had eaten all I could I decided I would take some back with me. I got a box and saw a small Sicilian boy and tried to make him understand I wanted him to get me some grapes. The boy kept hollering something to the effect of, 'Allemand—Boom! Boom!' Another small boy came along who understood Italian and told me the vineyard was full of 'booby traps.' We lost one of our men who went into a vineyard for grapes—and another one had his hand shot off."

Japs Worse
Major Adams went on to explain as a rule the Germans are not as bad as the Japs, but naturally they are fighting to kill. One of their bad habits are the booby traps. These traps are left only by armies that are retreating. The Germans leave articles like cameras, knives, helmets, Luger pistols, and even their dead, in obvious places to attract the attention of their enemies coming up. When these articles are moved the "booby" jumps about four feet into the air and explodes, sending small marble-like pellets flying. They maim more than kill—and seem like a waste of ammunition—because it only brings injury to a few—and not strategic points. Major Adams said the army makes every effort to furnish equipment for football, baseball, volley ball and other sports which can readily be set up and carried around for the men. When a little competition is set up the men have just as much fun as they used to at home. The army tries to bring in just as much equipment for recreation as they can because it is a great help to the morale of the men.

Christmas Boxes
One Commando asked Major Adams what the men overseas enjoyed most in their Christmas boxes. He told us how the men appreciated everything that was sent to them. They are so far away from the conveniences of the United States—one can hardly go wrong on what to send. However, Major Adams said, "The idea in your Christmas box is to put in your thoughts—and you can't go wrong."

clear picture of the life of our servicemen on the front lines. This talk, by Major Adams, was the most outstanding the Commandos have had at one of their meetings!

The Commandos are making final preparations for a trip to Camp White, October 3. They have been invited for "dinner" at noon at mess, spend the afternoon—and attend a tea dance, from 5 until 9 p. m. The girls have several new singing and dance numbers they will present. The entire chorus will do a new group of songs, under the supervision of their singing instructor, Mrs. Violet Moore. Isa Dorah Moldovan, of the Moldovan Dancing Studio, has worked out a South American dance routine for four girls to be featured. Mrs. Moore and Miss Moldovan donate their time in instructing the Commandos in singing and dancing.

"Masocot"
Little, talented 4-year-old Diane Mitka, of Malin, and a pupil of Miss Moldovan, has been made the "masocot" or honorary member of the Commandos. We have had a Commando uniform made for Diane, complete with blue skirt, red blouse, white dickey with her name embroidered on the collar in dark blue, and a dark blue, officers overseas hat. Diane will accompany us on our trips to army camps—and will be a featured dancer on our floor shows. She has gone to Camp White with us before and has won the "hearts" of the soldiers with her outstanding, intricate dance routines

Promotions
We have several promotions in rank we would like to mention. 2nd Lt. Mable Soderstrom has been promoted to a 1st Lt., 2nd Lt. Mary Trulove promoted to treasurer, Sgt. Dorothy Laurenson promoted to a 2nd Lt. (acts as secretary). Lt. Lauren-

Outstanding
This is only a highlight of some of the things Major Adams expressed in his stimulating and

Star Soup



Checking up in the kitchen, Marine Corps Brig.-Gen. Robert Denig samples a spoonful of soup during tour of inspection at Wright Junior College training school in Chicago.

son has worked up to a 2nd Lt. from a buck private. Tech. Sgt. Dorothy Constable has been promoted to a Master Sgt. and is in charge of the operations of the Center.

We are proud to announce four new members in the unit. They are Dorothy O'Sullivan, Faye Lucas, Agnes Vashak, and Mary Bishop.

Insignias

A few weeks ago we put up an insignia a soldier gave us of his division on the wall back of the food counter. We didn't realize at that time the interest men from different divisions would take in having their insignia represented on the wall. We now have 16 different insignias on the wall. If there is one not represented now—soldiers will mail us one after they return to camp. The Commandos and soldiers are getting considerable fun seeing how many new ones we can obtain now.

It seems we are always asking for something in our column. This week we would like to ask for ping pong balls. We haven't been able to buy them and we need them badly. If some one has a "home size" meat grinder we surely would appreciate having it to use. We need a meat grinder to grind cold meats and cheese in making sandwich spreads. And just one other item—it is so hard to buy sweet pickles now to serve with our sandwiches, mix in spreads and all—and we would appreciate home canned sweet pickles. We have a new personality

and service at the Center now. The soldiers and girls are getting a big bang out of 7-year-old, Danny Deimon. Danny comes into the Center, lugging his shoe shining equipment—and puts a "high shine" on a good many GI boots. Danny goes gaily, and seriously about his work—his customer may be singing in a circle around the piano, or lounging comfortably in an easy chair—but that makes no difference to Danny—he just moves his equipment and goes on shining shoes.

Sincere thanks to all of you who have brought donations into the Center. We appreciate it and here is what a soldier told us, Cpl. Ernest M. Barthelomew, "During 18 months in the army and being in four different camps—there has been no service given to service men that will compare with that of the Klamath Commandos." And, remember, it was all of you who made that possible!

There is no present reason to expect that victory will come soon or cheaply. It would be far more difficult for those Germans who are sick of the war to translate their feelings into action than it was in 1918. — OWI Director Elmer Davis.

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