

OUR MEN AND WOMEN IN SERVICE



THOMA RETURNS AN ALEUTIAN BASE-T/3

Walter G. Thoma of (Rt. 1, Box 613) Klamath Falls, Oregon, was among the first soldiers from the Aleutians sent to a separation center in the U. S. for discharge. He entered the army in November, 1940, and had spent 43 months in the Aleutians. His wife, Bessie Thoma, now resides in Klamath Falls, Ore.



MERRILL—Sgt. Harold D. Jones, who for the last year has been serving with the U. S. army 15th air corps as a radar technician has returned here under the furlough plan. He has served in Italy for about one year and will spend 30 days here with his wife, Eulafaye Woodley Jones, his young son Larry, almost two, and his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Everett Jones, all of Merrill.

He landed in the U. S. about ten days ago and arrived in Merrill Thursday night. He will report to Santa Ana for further military service upon leaving here.

STOREY GETS BADGE WITH THE 32ND INFANTRY DIVISION IN NORTHERN LUZON, P. I.

Serving with a medical unit of the veteran 32nd (Red Arrow) infantry division, PFC Owen R. Storey, husband of Mrs. Neva Storey, 901 Alameda, has been awarded the Medical Badge for satisfactory performance of duty under actual combat conditions. The division, commanded by Maj. Gen. William H. Gill, and in its fourth year of combat against the enemy in the Pacific, is currently fighting in the precipitous Caraballo mountains of northern Luzon.

PFC Storey, who is serving with the division's crack 128th infantry regiment, entered the army in July, 1944, and left the U. S. for overseas duty in December of 1944.

TUTER TRAINS

Among those graduating recently from an intensive course of gunner's mate training at service schools at Great Lakes, Illinois was Rollin Virgil Tuter, 19, son of Mr. and Mrs. Virgil L. Tuter of 4033 Washburn way in Klamath Falls. This bluejacket was selected for his specialized training on the basis of his recruit training aptitude test scores. Graduates from the twenty specialized courses taught at this base are sent to sea, to shore stations, or to advanced schools for further duty.

STEPHENS HOME

Sgt. William Stephens, son of Mr. and Mrs. E. Laton Stephens, arrived home on a two week leave Monday night from Spokane. He was transferred to Spokane from Texas a few weeks ago. Stephens' wife is coming up from San Francisco to be with him on leave. Stephens was with the U. S. bureau of reclamation in Grants Pass before he entered the service.

One of the 53 merchant seamen "miracle survivors" of a Jap sunk Victory ship, Thomas Charles Napier, Jr., able seaman, is visiting friends in Klamath Falls.

Napier is spending 10 of his 30 days' leave in the place he lived five years ago. He and his brothers attended Tullake schools. One brother, Nicholas, lost his life when the USS Atlanta was sunk in the battle of Savo Island near Guadalcanal. Another brother, Joe, is at sea with the merchant marines. Their parents now live in Chattanooga, Tenn.

Because only one member of the crew of 54 merchant seamen lost his life in the Japanese aerial action April 26, in which their ship was sunk off Okinawa, the men call themselves the "miracle survivors." All but one lifeboat jammed when the bomb struck. The boat sank just 20 minutes after being blasted by the Jap attack. All the crew were forced to swim through flaming waters to safety. Navy patrol boats, ignoring the overhead menace of enemy

planes, came to aid within a few minutes.

The name of the lost Victory ship is being withheld by navy authority.

This is the second "miracle" for Napier, who survived a previous merchant marine vessel sinking. He started sailing with the merchant marine, April 20, 1942.

GAIN WINS MEDAL WITH THE 29TH INFANTRY DIVISION, GERMANY

PFC Charles R. Gain, son of Mrs. L. E. Kernan, Sprague River, has won an Oak Leaf cluster to his Bronze Star for heroic achievement. Pvt. Gain is an aid-man for second battalion headquarters of the 175th infantry.

The text of the citation reads: "On February 23, 1945, prior to the crossing of the Roer river, the machine guns of the heavy weapons company were subjected to heavy mortar fire. One of the guns was knocked out and two men were injured. PFC Gain, regardless of his own safety, and while the shells were falling, treated and evacuated to safety one man who was seriously wounded."

GAIN WINS CLUSTER

PFC Charles R. Gain, serving with a medical detachment, U. S. army, in Germany, won the Oak Leaf cluster to his Bronze Star medal for heroic action in military operations against the enemy in Germany on February 23, 1945. Gain, aid man, distinguished himself in combat during the assault across and being the Roer. Under heavy artillery fire, he left his position of comparative safety to reach a wounded soldier. Gain administered first aid and evacuated him to the rear, "displaying exceptional courage and devotion to duty that reflects great credit upon himself and the military service."

CRUTCHFIELD WRITES

M/Sgt. Howard Crutchfield writing to his father, H. H. Crutchfield, 729 N. 11th, said, "I took a trip over Germany last week and saw the places that we have bombed, the place is really torn up. We started from England and flew over Brussels and Liege, Belgium, then went on to Essen, Frankfurt, Kassel, Hannover, Aachen, Munster, Misburg, Brunswick and Wiesbaden in Germany, then Luxembourg and Trier and then went on to Rheims and Paris. It took nine hours and a half to make the trip but we came back over London for a few minutes then back to the base. We flew so low over some of the towns I could read some of the signs. We circled Paris three or four times and flew around the

REUTER CITED AN EIGHTH AIR FORCE BOMBER STATION, ENGLAND

Sgt. Lester L. Rutter, 21, gunner from Klamath Falls, has recently been awarded the Air Medal for "meritorious achievement" while participating in 8th air force attacks on vital industrial targets and enemy communications in Germany. The official citation accompanying the award commented on the "courage, coolness and skill displayed by Sgt. Rutter on all occasions," as reflecting "great credit upon himself and the armed forces of the United States." The presentation was made by his group commander, Lieut. Col. Louis G. Thorup of Salt Lake City, Utah.

As a member of the 447th bomb group, a unit of the third air division, the division which has been cited by the president for the now historic England-Africa shuttle mission bombing of Messerschmitt factories at Regensburg, Germany, Sgt. Rutter flew combat missions in what is considered to be the toughest theater of aerial warfare.

The son of Mr. and Mrs. John Rutter of 2007 Etna, Klamath Falls, Rutter, before entering the army air forces in February, 1943, was employed by the Bablen Brothers Construction company at Redmond. He received his gunner's wings in September, 1944, at Las Vegas, Nev.

Eifel tower three times. We got so low we were lower than the tower. The only thing that was bombed in Paris was the railroad yards and one engine factory. There was hardly a building standing in the towns in Germany anywhere that was anywhere near a manufacturing district.

"We covered four countries and the capital of three of them in a little over nine hours which is really getting around in a hurry. We flew over in our B-17's, they called it a victory tour. I guess when Japan is bombed the way Germany has been, the war should be about over with."

SARGANT ASSIGNED

Pvt. Henry O. Sargant, son of Mr. and Mrs. G. Sargant, 5011 Harlan drive, is assigned in charge of the paint shop at the ordnance garage at John H. Payne field in Cairo, Egypt in the North African division of the air transport command.

Payne field, hub of all traffic of the North African division to the Far East, is one of the busiest fields in this theater, transporting high priority cargo and passengers to the war fronts of the world.

Pvt. Sargant, prior to entering the service in 1942, was employed by the Mettler brothers company. His wife, Mrs. Alice Sargant, lives with his parents.

SINCLAIR AWARDED

1st Lt. Stanley R. Sinclair, whose wife is the former Winifred Grady of Yakima, Wash., now residing at 1105 Pacific Terrace, Klamath Falls, was recently awarded five Oak-Leaf clusters to his Air Medal by Maj. Gen. John K. Cannon, commanding general of the 12th air force, in a formal ceremony held at his base in Italy. He is the son of Mrs. Bessie Sinclair of Selah, Wash.

Lt. Sinclair is a pilot of the veteran 60th troop carrier group, which staged the first allied airborne invasion in the war at Oran, Algeria, in 1942. These awards and the Distinguished Flying Cross, which has previously been awarded him, were presented in recognition of his outstanding work in delivering war supplies to allied partisan forces behind enemy lines in the Balkans. He has completed 75 such night combat flights in transport type aircraft. The majority of these missions have been landings on short and rough improvised fields in mountainous sections held by friendly forces. On return from these landing missions he has evacuated

wounded guerrilla fighters and other allied airmen who had been forced down behind the lines. His was also one of the planes which dropped the paratroops near Athens in October, 1944, to drive the Germans from Greece. During his year of overseas duty he has been authorized to wear three battle stars on his theater ribbon, covering the southern France, northern Italy and Balkan air combat campaigns.



MITCHELL AT IWO JIMA

Gene Mitchell, EM 2/c, USNR, son of Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Waldrip of Tulake, Calif., has added a star to his Asiatic-Pacific ribbon for participating in the bombardment and invasion of Iwo Jima aboard a heavy cruiser.

FREEMAN KILLS NIPS

PFC Clarence T. Freeman of Grants Pass, Ore., whose wife and son, Howard, live at 520 N. 12th in Klamath Falls, is credited with killing at least five Nips who had been a menace to American supply and ammunition trains in the Caraballo mountains of northern Luzon.

Japs, in cavern-like foxholes, had survived intense Yank grenade and rifle fire. They remained low and allowed fast-moving line companies to advance, then began sniping at American carrier trains, causing many casualties and disrupting supply lines. Freeman and a comrade, trained in the operation of a flame-thrower, were called upon to destroy the enemy positions.

The Oregonian and his buddy were given protection by riflemen, who poured a hail of lead into the Jap caves, forcing the enemy to stay low as the men crawled forward. Suddenly, the first cave became a mass of flame. The flame-throwing team inched their way towards the second cave.

Freeman peered into the hole and observed that it was subdivided into a series of small "rooms." Realizing that it would be impossible to reach all parts of the cave with its flame-thrower, Freeman decided to blast the position with dynamite. He passed the word back, and several blocks of TNT were brought up.

His plan complete, Freeman put his flame-thrower into action, and his comrade prepared to toss the dynamite into the cave. A terrific explosion shook the ground as tons of dirt and

rock came rolling down the hill, burying the Jap inmates alive. Estimates revealed that at least five Japs were killed during the operation. More important, vital ration trains were able to continue bringing supplies and ammunition to front line troops.

CONGRATULATED

Among the 185,000 men and women of the 8th air force congratulated by Lt. Gen. James H. Doolittle, who assumed command of the 8th in January, 1944, were several people from Klamath Falls.

"I wish to extend my personal congratulations and my heartfelt appreciation to every one of you for the magnificent job you have done," Gen. Doolittle said in a message to all personnel.

SMITH PROMOTED

Bernard M. Smith, 19, son of Mr. and Mrs. B. M. Smith of Alturas, Calif., has advanced to fireman first class, USNR.

Smith was aboard a U. S. escort carrier in the Pacific theater of war when she battled a raging typhoon off the Philippine Islands last December. The storm claimed three U. S. destroyers. During the typhoon, 32 planes were jettisoned off the flight deck, and crew members served as ballast against the force of the storm.

CPL. RINK IN ISLES

Cpl. Edith P. Rink of Klamath Falls is one Oregon Wac with USASOS in Manila who celebrated the first anniversary of her arrival in the Pacific theater of war. One of approximately 2500 Wacs who have replaced enlisted men for combat or duty in combat zones, Cpl. Rink is a typist and acting supply sergeant in the mail and records section of ordnance. She participated in a special retreat formation held for members of

NOUD DECORATED

T/5 John E. Noud, son of Mr. and Mrs. Barney Noud of Klamath Falls, was recently decorated with the Silver Star for gallantry in action in Cebu in the Philippines.

Noud was a member of a recovery squad assigned the mission of recovering two tanks disabled by enemy land mines in the vicinity of a certain hill. As a result of Japanese mortar and machinegun fire, the squad was ordered to leave their positions on the hill until the area could be neutralized. While withdrawing, they heard a call for help from two infantrymen who lay wounded on top of the hill.

Noud, with two other enlisted men and an officer, returned to the summit and, while still under

heavy enemy fire, administered first aid to the wounded men and then carried them to safety. Receiving his education in Klamath Falls, Noud entered the service at Portland in February of 1943. He has been active in ordnance work in the Hawaiian Islands, and in the Philippine campaign since its inception last October. His wife, Dorothy, lives in Portland.

CHECCHI WOUNDED

Word has been received from Daily Rink of Klamath Falls that her son, Pvt. Robert F. Checchi, was wounded in action in the Philippines recently.

For the part he had in the historic Superfortress attack on the Japanese main island of Luzon, Checchi has been commended by General Curtis E. LeMay, commander in chief of the bomber command in the Philippines with the ground forces who are supporting the daily Superfort assault on the Japanese mainland. He was wounded after one of three Superforts, P-51 Mustangs, P-51, Pete Gray, 2628 Mustang.

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