

45th DIVISION NEWS

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PALERMO, SICILY

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Division's Fame Spreads Over America!

The 45th is famous now. Newspapers and radio stations all over America, and British papers and stations, too, have been lauding the 45th's part in the Battle of Sicily.

Letters from America showed that special attention had been given this division by papers from New York to San Diego, Calif.

A recent program of the Army Hour in the United States was entirely devoted to the embarkation of the Thunderbirds from America. A transcription had been made there on the docks when we left.

Of course, newspapers in towns we once lived near were most interested, but remarks of important war officials and our own showing here made other papers take notice.

Acting Secretary of War Robert U. Patterson said of the 45th and the 82nd Airborne that their first time under fire «fought like seasoned veterans.»

He called this a tribute to our training.

Earlier General Montgomery had taken time out to praise the 45th's fight.

This record was featured on page one of the July 24 Army Times, which went on to say:

«Particular praise was given in news dispatches from Sicily to the 45th Division which had a baptism of fire in the fighting of the landings on the island, and which kept pace with the more experienced divisions in attaining their objectives. The 45th was commanded by Maj. Gen. Troy H. Middleton.»

Also on page one is a picture of Bill Mauldin in a story about the first issue of The Division News in Sicily.

Rome Open? Well, Not Yet

The Italian government has declared Rome an open city, but no Allied government has yet recognized it as such, it was revealed today.

The British press points out that Rome is the seat of government, a railroad center and a war industries center.

Americans said we could not consider it an open city until all soldiers were gone, through rail traffic stopped, and all war industries closed.

Open cities, by international law, are those undefended cities not contributing to the war effort in any way. Under international law they are not bombed.

General McArthur declared Manila an open city, but the Japs bombed it anyway.

For an Amateur, Victor Did Okay

It's a good thing matters ended when they did, or Pvt. Victor Plexico, Blacksburg, S. C., might have been faced with a real problem.

His buddy, Pvt. «Red» Scott got away out in front in an attack on a position, and three Italians armed with rifles took a careful bead on his rear.

Plexico saw this. With fixed bayonet, a gawdawful grimace and a hideous howl he charged the enemy trio. They threw up their hands and surrendered before he reached their position.

«Don't know what I'da done if they hadn't give up,» drawled the former member of a recon outfit. «Never handled a bayonet before in my life.»

Bob Hope May Entertain 45th

Bob Hope, the comedian who traveled the «Road to Zanzibar» and the «Road to Morocco,» is on his way to Sicily now, it was announced this week.

Hope probably will entertain the 45th sometime around August 21, it is believed.

This isn't certain-his schedule isn't fixed-but you can hope for Hope.



No, this isn't a Sicilian cork-gun; it's a baby carbine, Italian, the exact replica of the larger carbine used by the enemy at the front. Cpl. John H. Geurin, 500 Patton St., Wilmerding, Pa., sights the 25 calibre weapon which is called «G. Garbo» according to the nameplate on the stock.



St. Sgt. Robert L. Pope, Guthrie, Okla., is literally stepping up the power. That contraption he's walking all over is a captured Italian generator which builds up the power. The foot pedals are pumped. Pope holds another one in his hand.

Hebert Tolerates No Monkey Business

Ordinarily one man can easily escort 38 prisoners even if they are Germans, but Pvt. «Frenchy» Hebert brought his charges in under an artillery barrage and he brought them in on the double.

When he finally reached his CP, Hebert had 32 prisoners. The other six tried to escape.

Palermo Radio Airls U. S. Talent

Radio Palermo, now operated by the American Expeditionary Station, is now presenting a half hour of American music each night for the benefit of soldiers in Sicily.

The station is 565 on the dial in the regular broadcast band, and the program runs from 7:30 to 8 p. m.

Tommy Dorsey, Bing Crosby, Fred Waring and others will be heard.

Row, Row, Row Your Boat...

GERMANS LEAVING ISLAND OF SICILY

As Germans poured out of Sicily by every available means—even rowboats!—the last act of the drama of Siciiy neared hourly today.

How many troops Germany will be able to ferry across the channel to the mainland under a rain of bombs and the hail of strafing bullets is problematical, because in spite of reports of unearthly heavy flak the Messina Straits are alive with Allied planes harrassing the retreat.

Little Pvt. Pino Knew the Odds, But Got the Gun

By George Tapscott

The Germans had covered their retreat well. Three machine guns were placed along the top of a hill overlooking the grape orchard through which advancing troops would have to pass. There was only one way to reach the guns, and that was for a small man to inch his way through the orchard until he was close enough for a grenade.

Pvt. Manuel Pino, Denver, Colo., a scout, was small—only about 5 feet six inches tall, and not over 120 pounds. He began his slow pace through the orchard, hugging the ground every minute, taking advantage of every bit of cover the vines afforded. The machine guns splattered bullets all over the area, vainly searching for the man they knew was crawling toward them.

Finally Pino got as close to the guns as the cover would let him. Only twenty yards from the top of the hill where the guns were still chattering. The Germans threw three grenades down, but their aim was bad.

There was only one way to get the gun, and Pino knew it. He also knew there was one chance in a hundred of pulling it off without being cut down by the other two guns. There was no hesitation. Standing up and yelling, «We might as well get this over with,» he threw a perfect strike at the gun.

Before he could fall back under cover, he remaining guns cut him down.

Meanwhile, the German delaying action goes on. The American forces having taken Randazzo, moved on to take Oliveri. The British took Fiumefreddo and Piedmont Etna.

It had been announced earlier that 130,000 prisoners have been taken on the Island during the campaign.

Related to the Sicilian campaign is the bombing of Italy, and Milan took another pasting Sunday night. The people there, the Swiss say, are demonstrating for peace.

Italian Officer Costs Bob a Nickle

There were two things about the action that surprised Cpl. Bob Whittenbeck considerably.

He traced the course of the enemy motorcycle through the turns of the mountain road while he waited in the concealment of a ditch. Then, when it rounded the turn and was almost on him, he let fly with his rifle and received his first surprise: The bullet struck the machine and both riders went sprawling when the motorcycle went out from beneath them.

Surprise No. 2 came after he'd relieved the Italian officer of his pistol. The officer asked if he might have a souvenir of Whittenbeck. Amazed, the corporal handed him an American nickel and asked why he wanted it.

It seems the Italian had been in Russia, in North Africa and now his war was ended here on a Sicilian road. He wanted a remembrance.

Peepless Pair Are Alive, Anyhow

The outfit might still have the peep if the Italian tank commander hadn't taken that second look.

Pvt. John Malish, Osage, W. Va., walked along behind 60 Italian prisoners and his buddy, Pvt. Thomas Tarbert, rode beside the column in a peep.

Along came a small column of tanks. Tarbert pulled over and the armored vehicles rumbled on. Malish recognized the Italian model just about the time the rear tank slowed down and the commander peeked over the edge of the turret. Immediately all tanks did an about face and bore down on the group.

Tarbert and Malish peppered the tanks with Tommy gun fire while the jeep was crushed. Nobody was hurt.

McKean Now Bears Unpleasant Name

Pvt. James «jackass» McKean, Jonesboro, Ark., can forget the bray of the jackass, but can he ever live down the nickname he got from his squad mates?

MacKean was an outpost guard, with orders not to shoot unless he had to. Mindful of his order, he held his fire when he saw the bushes stir down the side of the road, thinking it might be the wind. When, however, the bushes kept stirring, and in a direct line to him, that was too much. Drawing a close bead on where he figured the unseen enemy should be, he let go.

The next minute the air was filled with excited questions from other guards, the dying bray of a jackass, and the shouts from the Italian peddler who had been riding him.

Cannon Men Enliven Town, Shoot at Things

The small town had been in our hands only a few hours when the cannon company pulled in. If the men finally proved to be a little trigger-happy, it was because of this fact and the warning they had received about snipers. Besides it was almost dark.

So when Cpl. Ray Kuykendall, Sacramento, Cal., saw a head peering over the edge of a church roof, he first challenged the figure, and, when no answer was received, let go with his rifle. The head dropped out sight.

Next morning he set out to see what he'd bagged. Laboriously he climbed the wall of the church, and peered over the edge of the roof. His single shot had landed right between the eyes of a statue.

Pfc. Bernie Stokes, same outfit, had been on the ball the night before too. His guard post was atop a parked vehicle near a smoldering fire started by artillery.

Near the fire was a small hut. Every few minutes a shadowy figure would emerge from the building and make a break for the fire. Every time he put in an appearance, Stokes would drive him back in the hut with a rifle shot. This kept up all night.

In the morning, Stokes advanced cautiously on the hut, all set to capture his prisoner. He was met at the door by an indignant native. The Sicilian wanted to know why, war or no war, a respectable citizen was shot at every time he tried to protect his property from fire.

Produce

It's taking Pvt. Bernard Ramsey a little while to get used to Sicily. The other day someone showed him a small tree sprouting skinny leaves. Now Ramsey is willing to bet anyone in the outfit that he can find a macaroni tree.

Like Two Holes In the Rowboat

Cpl. Art Falkenburg, a cannon company paddlefoot, found his half-track smack in the middle of a barrage of 88's one night.

At the height of the attack, Falkenburg yelled at one of his buddies to let down the shield.

"What for?" yelled the befuddled dogface above the roar.

"To let out some of this damned shrapnel," was Falkenburg's reply.

A Funny Man Is Sergeant Pope

St. Sgt. Robert L. Pope, Guthrie, Okla., division ordnance, has been having a lot of fun with a captured Italian hand grenade.

The other day he approached group of his buddies. "Look what I found," he said, showing them the "red devil." Then, when he'd gathered a large group around him, Pope pulled the pin. "Wonder what this is for," he remarked.

But nobody heard him. They were all diving for the nearest foxhole.

Then Pope casually remarked that the grenade had been stripped.

Friendly Are These Germans, Sergeant Finds

Friendly Italian soldiers have come a dime a dozen here in Sicily, but co-operative Germans are worth talking about. Take the three captured by Sgt. Melvin Weisz, for instance.

Weisz, Greeley, Col., was on his way back from an engagement with a trio of Nazis whom he watched with a wary eye. In the pitch darkness of the night the four entered a draw when suddenly one of the Germans stopped, explaining to Weisz that a band of Jerries lay ahead waiting for the procession.

While the American non-com took cover, one of the Germans shouted something and out of the blackness stepped a German officer. When he saw Weisz he turned and ran, but the sergeant dropped him with a shot from his rifle and went on after the rest of the enemy, his prisoners obediently following.

Going over a wall, Weisz dropped his rifle. With a courteous word one of the Germans stooped, picked the rifle up and handed it back to the captor. Weisz thanked him, affixed his grenade launcher and let go.

There was a flash, a roar, and in the darkness ahead four Jerries lay dead. Weisz continued with his three prisoners.

Life Saved

First Lt. Melvin Smith rescued one of his men, Pfc. Melvin Detwiler, from drowning last week. Detwiler had gone into deep water and was floundering there when the officer reached him.

The Boys Feel Kindly About Our Medics

Two reporters went to the field, and both came back with stories in praise of the Medics. One of the reporters is a Medic, and has taken a lot of kidding about it, so it's not surprising in his case. The other is an ordnance man, though, like Skeezix, and always in the U. S. had thought of the Medics as the red tape department. So, here's to the Medics!-Editor.

Medics have been called everything from "pill rollers" to "aspirin curealls" in peace time. Come war, and they make the scoffers swallow their words by the way they do their work.

Pfc. John Slovak, Bellmore, Long Island, N. Y., and Pvt. Homer Mathieu, Springfield, Mass., had been warned about danger of going out under direct fire to give aid. Nevertheless, when two soldiers were knocked out by mortar fire, they wormed their way up to the two and bandaged them up, still lying flat on their stomachs.

Pfc. Fred Beard wriggled his way up to two soldiers, one of whom had been hit. With the unwounded man helping him, Beard started to work. A bullet knocked the volunteer down, a hole in his head, but Beard finished the job, pulled the man out of line of fire, and returned to cover.

Pfc. John Slovak, Morris Hanson, Hanska, Minn., Pvt. Paul Hodges, and Pfc. Helmuth Gutersloh, N. Y. C., found a wounded German near a mine field. They threaded their way back toward the aid station, carefully following the beaten path through the mines. A bridge had been blown out, so Hanson, a small man compared to the 180 pound bulk of the German, used a fireman's carry to get the man through the by-pass. All together, they carried him about six miles, three to the aid station and three from the station to the ambulance.

Pvt. Joe Beard, Atica, Ind., is usually always hungry. He was particularly so during a barrage of 88's. He huddled in his hole until the rations were too much for him. Then he crawled out and made some stew.

St. Sgt. Kenneth Prather, Craig, Col., wasn't even armed with a litter when he went over the top in one engagement. He came back to his CP a little later with four Italian machine gunners and their loaded weapon.

There are a lot of wounded paddlefeet in the battalion who owe their lives to Capt. Peter C. Graf-fagnino, a medic from Louisiana. The captain picked his way into a mine field to give first aid to 19 casualties. Sappers later removed 54 mines from the same area.

Dead Germans Are Astonished

It was hard to say which group was the more surprised, the Germans who woke up to see American soldiers surrounding them or the Americans who saw what they thought dead men come to life.

The group consisting of Corp. Joe Hupka, Dillinsvale, Ohio, Pfc. Stanley Krul, Cleveland, Ohio, and Pfc. Vincent Lenhard, Lorain, Ohio, had gone on a sight seeing tour of the beach near their camp site. A short distance from the beach they saw a fox hole with what appeared to be three dead Germans in it. Yelling "Here's some dead Germans," the three charged the hole, intent on souvenirs.

The Germans woke at the shout, saw the Americans charging them with what appeared to be bloody purposes, and raised their hands. They were paratroopers who had been separated from their outfit the day before and had spent the time in between dodging our patrols and artillery fire.

Bomber Sets Up A Fish Fry

Tanks to a German bomber the men of one of the line companies had a fish fry the other day. The Jerry dropped his bombs in the sea, damaging nothing but a school of fish.

The men gathered them up, had them for dinner that day.

Caskets, Wheels, Dwarves Help Issue the News

With stories of the fighting Thunderbird being flashed to every state in the Union, the 45th Division News has come in for its share of publicity. Now that the folks at home know all about us, we figure its time you learned about the paper you're reading.

It's the same paper you read back in camp. The staff is the same, the name is the same and you'll be reading it at least once a week. What makes it different, what makes it news to the folks in the States is the fact that this is the first American paper ever printed on Axis home soil.

As a matter of fact, the first foreign edition was being distributed at the front on D plus three. Our headquarters then was Vittoria, which Sgt. Don Robinson, editor, and Sgt. Bill Mauldin, cartoonist, entered a few hours after the town had fallen.

They managed to find a printer out in the unbumbed countryside, and he was finally convinced to return to his shop in town. Typewriters weren't available and the printer didn't know from nothing about English, so we "printed" our copy in longhand, literally drew pictures of the type he was to set. Because the Italian types have few "k's", "w's" and "y's," we had to avoid using them.

But we still needed foreign news, and we had no radio. Our ingenious cartoonist took off on his bike, got to the beach, managed to bribe a sailor with an Italian carbine. He got our first foreign news on a ship's radio. Coming back he but got rid of the bike when a Messerschmitt strafed the shiny machine.

The first Division News edition on the island was a small unimposing affair, no larger than a letter. If you didn't manage to get one, it's because we printed only 1,000 copies.

The next two issues were mimeographed. Already the front was too far forward for our reporters to get there and back in a single day without a vehicle of their own, so while half the staff went out after stories the other half remained in town and printed the paper.

We moved forward to Caltanissetta and the same problems presented themselves. We finally located a printer, seven of them in fact, and work began on issue number 4. We called the printers the Seven Dwarves. You got the impression, being next to them, of being in Lilliputia.

But with a little help from us they did the job. Electric power was off in the city, so the huge flat-bed press had to be turned by hand, three turns of the mammoth fly-wheel for one copy-and we were printing a thousand copies. Just for the record, the highest number of consecutive turns on the wheel was made by Robinson who drew a super-human strength from his devotion to the sheet.

But the paper still didn't boast of pictures by Sgt. George Tapscott, or cartoons from Mauldin. So the latter set out for Palermo where he finally located an engraver. The next issue had a cartoon, and therein lies a tale.

The engraver had been bombed out of his plant. Mauldin helped him set up a darkroom in a chicken coop. In fact he was all set to go-except he needed zinc and there wasn't any on the island.

Mauldin got the zinc. He got it from a coffin-maker who was also hiding in the country. The man griped a little when he had to take it out of a casket's lining, but edition No. 5 had a cartoon.

But the troops pushed still farther forward, so we packed our typewriters and hit the road again. We ended in Palermo and that's where we are now.

We'd acquired some more equipment so it took us several days to move and get settled. There was a two-day hunt for a printshop, and the next day was Sunday. Monday the shop still was on fire from a bombing. That's why there was a 12 day wait between editions 5 and 6.

Now that we're settled we intend to print a paper his size at least once a week. But if we drop out of sight for a few days it may be because we're moving again.

Or maybe the coffin-maker will have run out of coffins.



Pfs. Pleaz Wdisenhunt, Caddo, Okla., decided that, war or no war, the company was in complete without a mascot. He walked the nearest house where he found this puppy, which the farmer was glad to trade for two cigarettes. Pooch answers to the name of "Vino" when he answers at all.

Memory Lapse Saves a Life

Forgetfulness is a bad thing usually, but on one occasion Pvt. Bill Hoffman, Wann, Okla., owes his life to it.

Hoffman had been doing some plain and fancy sniping from his fox hole to such good effect that the enemy brought a machine gun to bear on him. Bullets splashed dirt all over him, cutting away the earth from around him, and he was convinced that the hole might well be his grave.

About this time a half-track showed up and literally gave him curb service. It backed up to the fox hole long enough for him to clamber in, then turned loose its 50 cal. gun on the machine gun.

The driver had returned for the gun shield he had forgotten the previous day.

Kosovitch Was In a Big Hurry

Pvt. George Kosovitch, Philadelphia, Pa., is a man who can have his mind on two things at once but believes in doing only one of them at a time.

Kosovitch and Pvt. Eual Manes, Tahlequah, Okla., were outposts when suddenly they saw the enemy, in force, advancing toward them. Kosovitch got the jump on Manes and tore out for the rear, forgetting such trifles as rifles. Manes, a thrifty sort, picked up both guns and started out after him, yelling for him to take his rifle. Kosovitch, never slackening his pace, yelled back for Manes to hand it to him, but he wasn't fast enough. Manes carried them both back.

Paul Can Shoot, Even Strango Gun

St. Sgt. Paul Villegas is generous almost to a fault. In action on "Bloody Ridge," one of his platoon sergeants broke a rifle. Villegas turned over his M-1, grabbed an enemy rifle that was laying there.

And although he'd never handled such a piece before, the staff sergeant bagged six Germans with it.

S. S. O. Issues Kits, Papers

Distribution of the 45th Division News will be made at the Division Special Service office just west of Cefalu on the coast road, Capt. Richard G. Hagood, division special service officer, has announced.

In addition to the paper, a limited supply of magazines are available as well as miscellaneous equipment from Seventh Army. Capt. Hagood requests each division unit check at least every other day for equipment.

Distribution has been made on B-kits, containing radio, phonograph, transcriptions and books, and the athletic kits will be distributed as soon as the island campaign becomes stabilized.

EFM telegrams are delivered daily to Palermo, the truck leaving the Cefalu office at one o'clock in the afternoon. The cablegrams may be sent to any point in the United States, the message being limited to any three or fewer of those listed.

Funeral

A military funeral was given Pfc. John J. Nowakowski, infantry, who was drowned last Sunday.

45th Division News

Published by The 45th Infantry Division, every now and then, for the personnel. Address: None; we're transients.

STAFF

Sgt. Don Robinson... Editor
Sgt. Bill Mauldin... Cartoonist
Sgt. George Tapscott... Photographer
Cpl. Bill Barrett... Reporter
Cpl. Fred Sheehan... Reporter
Pvt. George Riley... Driver.

Grenades, Crawford, Are Dangerous!

Either Pvt. Crawford, paddlefoot, is convinced this is all a maneuver, or he hasn't any imagination. At any rate, he's had a lot of good luck.

In a mopping-up action, his squad came upon an apparently empty hut. Crawford pulled the pin on his grenade, tossed the hissing piece into the house. Then, before his mates could stop him, Crawford had vanished into the house after it.

There was a terrific explosion that bulged the sides of the feeble hut.

The buddies of Pvt. Crawford hung their heads in silence. He'd been a good guy.

Out of the settling dust that had been a Sicilian cottage stepped Crawford brushing his untorn clothes meticulously. «Wasn't nobody there,» he announced.

His squad leader, emotionally confused, took the erring private aside. Patiently he explained that after a grenade is thrown the better soldier waits for the report before he enters the building to investigate. Crawford nodded. It wouldn't happen again, he assured his sergeant. And it didn't.

A little later the same group came upon another hut. Again Crawford pulled the pin and let fly. This time, however, he didn't vanish into the house after the grenade. He just ran up to the window and looked in.

They closed their eyes on what followed. What they were about to see, they figured, wouldn't be nice. And Crawford had been a good guy.

The tinkle of shattered glass resounded above the roar of the explosion. Then came a voice: «Two men dead in there.»

And there was Pvt. Crawford, alive and unscratched, combing a window out of his hair.

German Soldier Laughs and Dies

It was Sgt. Herb Fish, Canon City, Col., who led one of the first squads to the top of «Bloody Ridge,» and while they didn't stay long, Jerry knew he'd been visited.

Going up the hill was tough enough. Fish shot more than one outpost before the top was reached and the Germans counter-attacked the small force with fixed bayonets.

The squad retreated in order. Fish accounted for 10 Nazis before a blow on his head sent him to the ground, dazed for a second. When he came to he discovered his helmet had been ripped down the center, but he wasn't hurt.

What made Fish fighting mad was the German who shot him. Assuming the American to be dead, the Nazi laughed heartily and went on his way. So Fish shot him.

However, the non-com isn't holding the helmet as a souvenir. «Might as well throw it away,» he explains. «Can't wash in it any more.»

Soviets Drive On Smolensk

While her troops still closed in on Kharkov and Bryansk, Russia sent a spearhead through the center to bear down upon Smolensk, it developed this week. This drive killed 8,000 Germans in three days.

Twenty localities were captured up to Monday morning.

The Germans were counterattacking at Kharkov, using Tiger tanks in an effort to save their last exit railway.

Bulletins

RUSSIA — The Soviets have taken Karacev, and have surrounded Kharkov.

SICILY — The Allies have taken Taormini.

GERMANY — Mosquito Bombers bombed Berlin for the third day running.

ITALY — Milan was bombed for the fourth time in three days.

Winnie, F.D.R. Met Last Week

It was revealed this week that President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill met for three days at the President's Hyde Park estate as a forerunner to their official conference in Canada later in the week. It is presumed that the President and Prime Minister discussed the agenda of the forthcoming Quebec conference, at which they will be accompanied by their staffs of military and naval strategists.

Welcome Boys, Welcome Indeed

A small group of Canadian soldiers, on their way back to their outfits, sighted the bivouac area dead ahead. Here, they figured, they could spend a peaceful night before going on in the morning.

The next instant they were hugging the ground under a cross fire of machine guns. They wandered smack into the middle of a paddlefoot battalion battle problem.

Printed by I. R. E. S.,
Palermo, Sicily

Top Kic Seems A Draft Dodger

First Sgt. Howard Simpson, Chickasha, Okla., a member of a field artillery battery, is being threatened with the F. B. I.

Several days ago the sergeant received a notice from his draft board in Abilene, Tex., to the effect that his case would be turned over to the F. B. I. unless he reported to the board at once.

Simpson got out of the army on the over-age clause some time ago, but rejoined his outfit later, without notifying his draft board of his

At Ease

Visitors who walk into the C. P. of one of the infantry companys rub their eyes and wonder if the heat has hit them when they see what occupies a prominent place in it.

«It is an overstuffed easy chair which 1st Lt. Woodard Lackey, Stillwater, Okla., picked up near the waterfront in Palermo.

STAR SPANGLED BANTER

By Bill Mauldin

