

I'M IN THE ARMY NOW

By
Cpl. Whitt N. Schultz

Special to the Highland Park Press
Tribute to the Ground Crew!

CHANUTE FIELD, ARMY AIR FORCES TRAINING COMMAND, Feb. 18.—

Six officers studying advanced navigation at Chanute Field have flown 4,750 hours, traveled 3,290,000 miles in Allied bombers and transports and participated in missions which dropped 684,000 pounds of bombs on the Japs and Germans.

Wearing ribbons representing the Air Medal, Distinguished Flying Cross, Silver Star, and campaign decorations from all theaters of combat, these officers have bombed France, Belgium, Germany, New Guinea, and the Japs in the Aleutians.

Take Capt. J. C. Beardsley, 28, who has 1,300 hours in Liberators and Fortresses. He wears the Air Medal with Oak Leaf cluster and the DFC. He has been in four crashes and on 91 combat missions.

"We were short of navigators. That's why I went on so many missions," he says. Main bombing objectives of Capt. Beardsley's squadron were ships and enemy installations in Kiska harbor on the Aleutian islands.

Bombing from altitudes of 50 feet, below heavy fog, Capt. Beardsley said that one time the fog was so dense "We dropped bombs at a cruiser and sank a sub. In our log book we entered, 'Sighted cruiser, sank sub.' We got the cruiser later."

"I happened to be navigator on the command ship during the fiercest battle of Attu. There were only 19 out of 2,200 Japs alive after that battle. We knew they were committing hari kari. We could see flashes from their hand grenades as they committed mass suicides."

Capt. Beardsley said he had a chance to talk to two Japs. One, a captured ack-ack gunner, was asked if he was sorry he didn't hit more American planes.

"No," replied the Jap, "I like to shoot guns."

Another prisoner was questioned. Capt. Beardsley said this one hoped to live in the United States after the war. Or, if possible, on an American island!

1st Lt. Samuel Stalnack, 29, who spent five and a half months in the Aleutian islands flying the same kind of missions as Capt. Beardsley, won the Air Medal "for continuous missions under adverse conditions."

"At first the Jap pilots were good," Lt. Stalnack said. "Then we knocked out their first string. Their second team was second rate. We got rid of them in a hurry."

"I can't say enough in praise for those ground crew men," he continued. "I was officer of the guard for a week and when I was doing my round of night checking, I'd see those ground crew fellows working at all hours in the mud and rain. They worked with flashlights."

"One day we cracked up a ship on the runway. Our ground crew replaced the entire wing. They did this without specialized tools and I think with baling wire and adhesive tape," he concluded.

And then there's Capt. James W.

Knapp, 28, who has been on 36 missions in the Southwest Pacific and who has over 800 hours in the air.

Winner of the DFC and Silver Star, Capt. Knapp navigated Fortresses over enemy ships, installations. He tells of the time he was shot down:

"In B-17's we were daylight bombing Rabaul. We made four passes over the target. We were after an airdrome. Ack-ack shells puffed all about us. Some hit. We ran into 15 Zeros, and had a rugged battle. We were pretty well shot up but managed to get away. Our ship was so badly damaged we couldn't make it home. We landed in water near a tiny island. For two days we stayed there. Natives fed us until we were rescued."

Also in the Southwest Pacific area was 1st Lt. James N. Freeman, 22, a veteran of 28 missions, 750 hours in the air, and an Air Medal and Silver Star winner. Lt. Freeman was a navigator on a Liberator and was on one of the first Liberators operating out of New Guinea.

Telling how he won his Silver Star, Lt. Freeman said:

"Our crew attached a convoy single-handed. We were on daylight reconnaissance. We went 400 miles out of our way to get into a lot of trouble. Six Zeros and one Jap two-engine bomber went after us. We battled steadily for 25 minutes. We knocked down two Zeros and the bombers."

1st Lt. Robert A. Bercu, 22, was with the 8th Air Force in England before coming to Chanute Field for further training. As navigator on a Flying Fortress, he flew in 12 missions over France, Belgium, Holland. He has the Air Medal and Purple Heart.

It was back in January of '43 that Lt. Bercu was wounded. In a raid over France, his group met heavy ack-ack fire after bombing enemy submarine pens. Dropping behind the formation to cover a straggling Fortress, Lt. Bercu's ship met up with 30 Focke-Wulfes. A dogfight followed and lasted an hour and a half. Twelve enemy planes were downed. And Lt. Bercu found shrapnel in his leg.

"Once I saw one of our Forts come limping in after a rugged fight. One half of its tail was shot away. Those ground crew guys had that bomber back in the air the next day," said Lt. Bercu.

Although 1st Lt. Raymond M. Coveney was never in any combat, he has been in each of the Allied theaters of operations, navigating Air Transport Command ships. He is authorized to wear all theater ribbons — but he doesn't because, "I wasn't exactly in the fight. I was just helping to deliver cargo, personnel, and airplanes to the men up front."

In all his 500 hours in the air, Lt. Coveney has never had an engine or a mechanical failure.

"Yep," he says, "those fellows in the ground crew really keep us way up there in the wild blue yonder."

We hesitated to tell this about George—we really did—but his mother thought he should be able to take a bit of gentle kidding. Well, here it is. A local girl, visiting in New London, Conn., where Lt. (j.g.) George Clark is stationed, made, on her return, this statement concerning him: "The handsomest man I EVER saw!"

George's fine build and his uniform. We recall how George, in the early part of the war, spent a good slice of a month's salary on train fare, etc., where he went the word war the same—"too tall." Finally he located in the Coast Guard, where the basic grind of scrubbing floors, digging ditches, etc., was so much fun to the studious George, who'd always had his nose in a book. Well the Coast Guard grabbed him, kept him, and still has him—as an instructor. This seems about the right place for a fellow who has earned straight A's from kindergarten through university. He attended the local schools, was graduated from Loyola University, and received his master's degree at University of Michigan, where he also taught a course in accounting. Last July he married the former Mary Ellen Spurgeon, of Detroit, a college mate, and he is, at present, still stationed at New London. He has one sister, Marilyn, a shy colleen of about 12, and his parents are Mr. and Mrs. George Clark, Sr., of 643 Vine Ave.

Pvt. Lloyd Moon, 1416 Pleasant Ave., a recent inductee in the service, is now stationed at Camp Grant, Ill., where he will receive six months' training with the medical corps. Pvt. Moon is well-known in town, having graduated from the local high school and since that time, 1930, having served in the local post office. He has been active in Boy Scout work for 18 years, both as scout and as scoutmaster. His wife is the former Ruth Benson of Ravinia, and he has one four-year-old child. Mr. and Mrs. Fred Moon, 598 Homewood Ave., his parents, have three other sons in the service—Pvt. Melvin Moon, stationed at Camp Beal, Calif., 1st Lt. Robert at Granada, Miss., and A/C Verne, who is only awaiting his 18th birthday and graduation from high school to enter active service.

Four more local 17-year-olds recently qualified as Army Air Cadets, and will train as pilot, navigator or bombardier. They are:

Loren P. Werhane, son of Mr. and Mrs. Ray Werhane, 603 Onwentsia Ave., whose brother, Ray, Jr., is a member of the V-12 program at Oberlin College, Ohio. John L. Zahnle, student at the local high school and member of the rifle club, whose parents are Mr. and Mrs. John J. Zahnle, 703 Grandview Ave., and Roland C. Schlabowske, son of Mrs. Fred Schlabowske, 31½ Clay Ave., Highwood. Roland's father, Fred, gunner's mate 3/c, USN, is stationed in Cuba, and his brother, Jerome, coxswain, petty officer 3/c, recently home on leave is on sea duty.

Daniel Murphy, 17, sophomore student at the local high school, where he is a member of both the undergraduate basketball and football teams, is awaiting his orders from the U.S. Navy. He is the son of Mr. Lyman Murphy, 447 Glencoe Ave.

Cpl. Gilbert Pantle, of the U. S. Army infantry, has been promoted to the rank of sergeant. His parents are Mr. and Mrs. Chris Pantle, 828 Deerfield Rd. He is stationed at Camp Howze, Texas.

A/C Stuart Smith, is now stationed at New Haven, Conn., where he is receiving training in the Army air forces training command school at Yale University. His parents are Major and Mrs. Raymond D. Smith, 233 Laurel Ave.

Ensign Harry Jacobsen, son of Mr. and Mrs. Hans Jacobsen, County Line Rd., Deerfield, received his wings and commission, last week, at the Naval air base, Pensacola, Fla. A graduate of the '38 class at Highland Park High, he is a member of the Hjalmer Olsen Lake Co. flight squadron.

Sgt. Edgar "Bud" Vinyard, of the Coast Artillery, is now stationed at Flushing, N.Y. After graduating from the local high school, Sgt. Vinyard attended North Central College at Naperville, Ill. He was inducted into the service in March, '42. His parents, Mr. and Mrs. E. L. Vinyard, 1311 Judson, expect him home presently, on furlough.

Ensign Wm. M. Jones, USN, son of Mr. and Mrs. Wm. T. Jones, 310 No. Linden Ave., reports that he is stationed at a large army and navy base in the Pacific area, where the scenery is beautiful, the climate fine and the ants voracious, making it imperative that all eatables be disposed of immediately upon arrival. The natives are of French origin. Ensign Jones, in the service for over a year, was graduated from the local schools and from Dartmouth College.

Cpl. Robert "Bob" Gifford, of the amphibian engineers, has been promoted to the rank of sergeant. Home from Camp Gordon Johnston, Fla., on furlough, he boasts a loss of 25 pounds in weight, a 34-inch waistline, and is looking fine. "Giff" was graduated from the local high school and attended Illinois University until the date of his induction, Feb. 2, 1943. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Carleton R. Gifford, 825 No. St. John's Ave.

Two local young men who are now stationed at Trux Field, Madison, Wis., for advanced radio training are Pfc. Louis J. Crovetti, son of Mr. and Mrs. Tony Crovetti, 329 Highwood Ave., and Pvt. Joseph Mornini, son of Mr. and Mrs. Chris Mornini, 326 Highwood Ave., Highwood.

Pfc. Edgar Bortolotti, son of Mr. and Mrs. James Bortolotti, 134 North Ave., Highwood, is now home on a ten-day furlough "and glad to be here." He is stationed with an anti-tank company at Camp Livingston, La., where he is a member of the 342nd Infantry swing orchestra, playing either clarinet or sax. He is 21, and has been in the service since Feb., 1943.

Major Stuart A. Prosser, 181 Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, commanding officer of the meteorological cadet unit at this post of the Army Air Forces Training Command, was recently promoted from the rank of captain. A broker in civil life, Maj. Prosser received his commission on May 13, 1942. He is a veteran of World War I. A graduate of the University of Chicago, he attended the School of Military Aeronautics in Champaign, Ill., in 1917. He is the son of Mrs. Wm. A. Prosser, 222 Laurel Ave.

A/c Ralph Higgins, son of Mr. and Mrs. Arch Higgins, 693 Central Ave., has been sworn into service and is awaiting his call to report for training. He is 18 years of age, a senior at the Highland Park high school, and a member of the student council there. His father, Mr. Arch Higgins, is a World War I veteran, having served overseas for two years with the AEF.

Lawrence O'Neill, m/m, petty officer 1/c, USN, nephew of Mr. and Mrs. John Schwingel, 1048 No. Green Bay Road, is now on duty in an aircraft carrier in the So. Pacific. His wife, the former Hazel Murry, and his four-year-old son live on Roger Williams Ave., Ravinia.

UP TO NOW

Up to now, only a comparatively few men from the Highland Park area have returned from service, but one problem that should be receiving their careful attention is the retention of their government insurance.

There are three plans available to the veteran who wants to keep a part of his insurance. He can convert it to ordinary life, 20 payment life or 30 payment life. This insurance policy offers an easy, safe way to save money, and deserves more attention than the average veteran is likely to accord it. One indication of its value is the fact that the American Legion, which is familiar with its worth through first hand experience, urges the returned men to keep it in force.

For ordinary life, the cost runs from \$1.23 per \$1,000 for a man 20 years of age to \$1.98 per thousand if the veteran is 38. This means that a veteran 20 years old would pay \$12.30 a month for \$10,000 insurance. It could also be paid in quarterly installments of \$36.80, semi-annual installments of \$73.30 or annual installments of \$145.60. The policy also has a cash surrender value ranging from \$8.60 per \$1,000 after the first year, to \$230.50 per \$1,000 after 20 years, increasing to \$570.21 at 40 years.

For 20-payment life, the cost ranges from \$1.96 per \$1,000 at the age of 20, to \$2.70 per \$1,000 at the age of 38. This insurance has a cash surrender value ranging from \$17.81 per \$1,000 after the first year to \$504.38 per \$1,000 after 20 years, and increasing to \$723.24 after 40 years. Of course, no premiums fall due after 20 years, as the policy is then completely paid up.

For 30-year paid up life, premiums at the age 20 are \$1.54 per \$1,000 and \$2.18 per thousand if the veteran is 38. The cash surrender value ranges from \$12.30 per \$1,000 after the first year, to \$340.59 after 20 years, \$699.92 after 30 years, when the policy is completely paid, and up to \$723.24 per \$1,000 after 40 years.

In addition to the advantages listed above, this insurance also pays dividends, which, as time goes on, materially lessen the actual cost of the insurance. Also, the veteran's family is at all times protected by the amount of insurance in force, no matter how many months or years he has been paying on the policy.

Complete information to individual cases is available from the Legion officers of any Legion post.

Up to now, little has been said publicly in Highland Park about support of the Legion's "GI Bill of

Rights," a bill designed to aid veterans of this war in obtaining their proper rights and privileges. Interest, however, has been focused on the need for such legislation by the case of the San Francisco veteran who was discharged from the army less than three months after being blinded at the bloody crossing of the Volturno River in Italy. His pay was five months in arrears, he was not given proper discharge papers, which meant that he could not obtain help from the Veteran's Administration, and he was forced to buy a pair of glasses, which might have saved the sight of one eye, from his own slender funds.

No fair-minded American would consider this case as average, but the mere fact that it DID happen once, proves that it COULD happen again. Any organization the size of the United States Army must, through the operation of the law of averages, contain at least a few officers and men who are unsympathetic, inefficient or both. They are in the great minority and, almost always, any neglect or inefficiency on their part will be remedied by others who are all they should be.

However, the enactment of the "GI Bill of Rights" will plug the loophole that now exists in the wall that protects the rights of our men. For that reason, the bill deserves the support of every American.



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In The Nation's Service

THE ONE-HUNDRETH MAN

This variation of a story that has gone the rounds so many times that one is apt to feel that it might be just propaganda. But we can vouch for its truth.

He was an overseas veteran, evidently home on furlough. His young face bore lines one hates to see in the face of a boy his age. His hands were scarred and welted, as if from burns or shrapnel. He was telling his seat-mate on the train of an experience he'd had since returning to the homeland. His words floated distinctly across the aisle.

"He was one of these cocky guys," he said, in effect, "conscious of his stripes. Handsome bird, too. Just the type," wistfully, "that girls go for."

"Well, he was sounding off, and he didn't seem to mind who heard him. I don't care how long this war lasts," he boasted. "I'm safe and I'm having one swell time."

"Do you know," the young vet said, huskily, "that hurt—it really cut. Then I just saw red. I felt like socking him. And," he added naively, "I did!"

The fight, it seems, was stopped by some M.P.'s, and happily enough, the ending was perfect. Upon learning the cause of the trouble they bore the smug one away and the young vet was left to enjoy his well-earned furlough.

Now the point of the story is this. However selfishly complacent the offender felt over his soft berth, it is hard to understand how he could have expressed himself so callously in the hearing of one who had gone through hell in the line of duty—or, indeed, in the hearing of anyone else. Self respect, alone, should have put a curb on his tongue. It might be well for him to understand the reaction of the

world in general to his sentiments. He is, undoubtedly, the type of Yank the Japs had in mind when they started to shove Uncle Sam and Uncle Sam's nephews around.

This in no way intended as a slur upon the many thousands of red-blooded young servicemen who, much to their disgust, are held in this country. Of course no one, in his right mind, is eager to plunge into the jaws of death—the instinct of self-preservation is against that. Nevertheless, ninety-nine out of one hundred are quite ready and willing to face their share of the peril that is now the lot of America's young men. This fellow is the hundredth.

So we'll just leave it at that. He is the "one-hundredth man." Poof fellow!

In the recent conquest of Kwajalein, where the 4th American Marine division stormed ashore behind a rolling barrage from battleship and aircraft, losing only 286 men to the loss of 8,000 Japs, several North Shore men took part. Pvt. Philip J. Zoul, USMC, of Highwood, represented our section of the North Shore in this battle which takes its place as "one of the world's historic artillery bombardments," bringing the end of the war closer. Pvt. Zoul, who with his father, Mr. Eli Zoul and his twin sister, Phyllis, for many years made their home with Mrs. John Llewellyn, 121 Prairie Ave., Highwood, attended the local high school until the date of his enlistment in the Marine Corps in March, '41. He received his basic training at San Diego, and was stationed at Mare Island and Camp Pendleton before being transferred to a Pacific base. His sister, Mrs. Phyllis Zoul Paxton, now lives at Zion City.

DON'T FORGET

The last day for filing income tax reports is March 15th. The local deputy collector has an office at 538 Central Ave. Phone 4010.

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