

Wrapping things up in the Mediterranean

By Ernie Pyle



Now finally the Tunisian campaign is over, spectacularly collapsed after the bitterest fighting we have known to date. It is only in those last few days that I came to know what war really is. I don't know how any of the men who have been through the thick of all that hill-by-hill butchery could ever be the same again. The end of the Tunisian war brought an exhilaration, then a letdown, and later restlessness from anticlimax that I can see multiplied a thousand times when the last surrender comes. The transition back to normal days will be as difficult for many as was the change onto war, and some will never be able to accomplish it.

Now we are in a lull and many of us are having a short rest period. I tried the city and couldn't stand it. Two days drove me back to the country, where everything seemed more cleaner and decent. I am in my tent, sitting on an newly acquired cot, writing on a folding German table I picked up the day of the big surrender. The days here are so peaceful and perfect they almost give us a sense of infidelity to those we left beneath the Tunisian crosses, those whose final awareness was a bedlam of fire and noise and uproar.

Here in the Mediterranean surf caresses the sandy beach not 100 yards away, and it is a lullaby for sleeping. The water is incredibly blue, just as we always heard it was. The sky is a cloudless blue infinity, and the only sounds are birds singing in the scrub bushes that grow out of the sand. Little land terrapins waddle around, and I snared one by the hind leg with a piece of string and tied it in photographer Chuck Corte's tent while he was out, just for a joke. Then I found myself peeping in every few minutes to see how the captive was getting along,

and he was straining so hard to get away that I got to feeling sorry for the poor little devil, so I turned him loose and ruined my joke.

An occasional black beetle strolls innocently across the sandy floor. For two hours I've been watching one of them struggling with a cigarette butt on the ground, trying to move it. Yesterday a sand snake crawled by just outside my tent door, and for the first time in my life I looked upon a snake not with a creeping phobia but with a sudden and surprising feeling of compassion. Somehow I pitied him, because he was a snake instead of a man. And I don't know why I felt that way, for I feel pity for all men too, because they are men.

It may be that war has changed me, along with the rest. It is hard for anyone to analyze himself. I know that I find more and more that I want to be alone, and yet contradictorily I believe I have a new patience with humanity that I've never had before. When you've lived with the unnatural mass cruelty that mankind is capable of inflicting upon itself, you find yourself dispossessed of the faculty for blaming one poor man for the triviality of his faults. I don't see how a survivor of war can ever be cruel to anything, ever again.

Yes, I want the war to be over, just as keenly as any soldier in North Africa wants it. This little interlude of passive contentment here on the Mediterranean shore is a mean temptation. It is a beckoning into somnolence. This is the kind of day I think I want my life to be composed of, endlessly. But pretty soon we will strike the tents and traipse again after the clanking tanks, sleep again to the incessant lullaby of the big rolling guns. It has to be that way, and wishing doesn't change it.

It may be I have unconsciously made war seem more awful than it really is. It would be wrong to say that all war is grim; if it were, the human spirit could not survive two and three and four years of it. There is a good deal of gaiety in wartime. Some of us, even over here, are having the time of our lives. Humor and exuberance still exist. As one soldier once said, the army is good for one ridiculous laugh per minute. Our soldiers are still just as roughly good humored as they always were, and they laugh easily, although there isn't as much to laugh about as there used to be.

Clark Gable is just a two-bar Joe doing his job



Last summer he quieted a rumor that he was going to accept a direct commission as a major by enlisting as a private in Los Angeles. On Oct. 28, after completing the air corps OCS at Miami Fla., he was commissioned a second lieutenant. He served at Tyndall Field, Fla., for a while, and later was shipped to a mid-West field. He came to England about seven weeks ago, has been on one raid (Antwerp, May 4) and his job here is to make a training film for aerial gunners. He is 42 years old, six feet one inch tall, his hair is grey. He seems like an OK guy. With the possible exception of the German Army, no one is having a tougher time trying to fight this war than Capt. Clark Gable.

They want to know

A few hundred thousand relatives of privates in the infantry who fought in North Africa want to know why Clark Gable wasn't a private in the infantry who fought in North Africa. Mothers of Marines on Guadalcanal want to know why he wasn't a Marine on Guadalcanal. The fathers and mothers, sisters and friends of the staff sergeants on combat crews of B17s and B24s want to know why he is a captain instead of a staff sergeant. And some of the boys wonder.

He is not a captain doing a staff sergeant's job. He is a captain doing a job that has been done by majors and better, and he went from a second lieutenant to a captain in less than six months, not because he had a direct pipeline to the commanding general, but because he is an intelligent man doing a good job for the Air Force.

Last Saturday a couple of carloads of newspapermen, most of whom were women, were taken to an Eighth Air Force field to watch the public relations office take the wraps off their man Gable. They were prepared to write cynical articles of the movie star playing a phoney part, but Gable fooled them. He was a very

nice guy about it all, and his performance at the press conference left nothing to be cynical about.

He didn't try to act any part. He was Clark Gable in the Air Force, a little tired, but resigned to being looked at and talked to. And he looked like a very decent guy with no angle to his being where he was.

The conference was held around a B17, and there were several combat men from Gable's station hanging around. The captain was dressed in his 'class A's', and he looked like what America thinks the boys in the air corps look like.

His mustache has acquired a slightly RAF look, his hair is a little long, and the collar of his leather jacket is turned up with that casual nonchalance which makes life look easy. The cap he wore looked just a little more like an air corps cap than most, and he pulled it just a little further over his right eye than the rest.

He is in England on the orders of Brig. Gen. Luther S. Smith, director of the Air Force training program. With him are 1/Lts. Andrew J. McIntyre, former MGM cameraman, and John Mahin, who wrote several of the scripts for Gable's pictures.

Together the three of them, with the help of several veteran gunners, are putting together a film they hope will be of some help in the training program of aerial gunners. In the film, Gable interviews men, gets opinions and observations on equipment and combat problems. He appears in some scenes- does not appear in others.

He went on the Antwerp raid so he could talk through something besides his hat about raids. One of the correspondents asked him if he was going on another.

"I'm going to do what I have to to finish this job." Another asked Gable if he had any pin-ups in his room on the station. He didn't know what they were. "You know, pictures of Jane Russell or Dorothy Lamour in bathing suits." Gable has no pin-ups.

He is a regular man. He gets an awful lot of unfair criticism. He used to go out to the towns once in a while but the people won't let him alone, so he just doesn't go out any more. He hasn't seen a movie since he's been here. (GWTW still plays here at the Ritz in Leicester Square.)

Herewith ends the report on Capt. Clark Gable. For our money, he is an OK Joe fighting a war, just like any other Joe. The Stars and Stripes will leave the guy alone, as he would like to be left, for the duration.

EXTRA!! Stars and Stripes EXTRA!!

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YOUR ARMED FORCES NEWS

READING EDITION

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TENACIOUS WOLFHOUNDS TAKE TOJO'S TIKI!!



Troops of the 25th Infantry Division return home with stolen idol.

A daring raid was carried out recently on the Pacific island of Guadalcanal. Elements of the 25th Infantry Division struck at a special Japanese convoy carrying a sacred artifact on loan from Tokyo.

Not your average spoon. When Japan signed the Tripartite Pact with Germany and Italy in 1940, Emperor Hirohito sent along 3 ornate carved wooden spoons of ancient Japanese origin. Created during the Wang Dynasty, they were a symbol of power and absolute rule for a millennia. Consecrated with a blood oath, they became the unofficial symbols of the Axis, nearly as notorious as the swastika and the rising sun.

Morale train derailed.

As a result recent bitter fighting and hard losses on the Canal, Japanese morale and fighting spirit was beaten down. Emperor Hirohito dispatched General Hideki Tojo to Guadalcanal with the Jap spoon to bolster the spirits of the fighting Nips and inspire them to turn the tide on the small island. Niki-Noo-Kaa (onward to victory) was the battle cry at the Tojo-led rally for the Jap troops. After the rally, Tojo and the spoon were whisked away in separate vehicles towards a destroyer to take them back to Tokyo. Tipped off by loyal natives, American troops attacked the convoy of vehicles and split it in two. The vehicle carrying Tojo got away, but not the one carrying the spoon. 100 loyal

BENNY, HOPE, MARX TO TRAVEL USO CIRCUIT



The United Services Organizations (USO) announced recently it will be launching a tour nicknamed the "Foxhole Circuit" to the Pacific Theater, bringing down-home entertainment to soldiers in the field. The purpose of the "Foxhole Circuit" is to bring a little comedic relief to soldiers in the field as close to the lines as safety

will allow. Entertainers such as Jack Benny, Bob Hope, and Groucho Marx have already committed to the tour.

Exact stops on the tour are still being worked out, and will most likely remain secret until the last minute to help maintain an air of safety for those touring.

Japanese soldiers, sent along to guard the spoon, fought to the last man to keep it from falling into Allied hands, but they all fell to the superior fire of the Wolfhound raiders.

Symbol of Axis no longer.

In an amazing show of bravado, a huge party was thrown the night of the successful raid at Henderson field. The spoon was paraded around camp and held aloft for all to see. Loud chants of "Spoon, Spoon" were heard as those who took part in the raid took turns drinking plum wine and captured saki from the spoon. Early the next morning under cover of darkness, the spoon was transferred to a submarine lying off the southern coast of Guadalcanal, and put into

the hands of General Douglas MacArthur. The spoon accompanied Dougout Doug on his heroic return to the Phillipines. "This spoon, once the symbol of the might of the Japanese Empire, shall now inspire the Allies with the same fervor it instilled in the Japs. With it we begin our slow march towards Tokyo."

**by Andy Rooney
Stars and Stripes staff**

See exclusive spoon pictures on next page

SPOONS of the AXIS!!

A special look at the idols behind the Axis...
Most pictures never seen by ALLIED EYES!!



Above: Samuiri warriors of the Wang Dynasty first created the elaborate wooden spoons.

Right: Moussolini at a rally in early 1941. Note: the photo appears to be doctored to show his spoon bigger than Hitler's or Hirohito's- they are in fact all of the same size.



Hitler took his spoon everywhere, even to top secret planning sessions. Close aides say it guided his every tactical move.

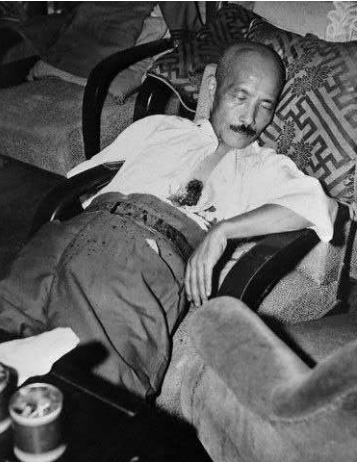


Hirohito shown at his first public appearance since losing his spoon.

Bottom left: One look says it all- Goering has two spoons, but will always be in the shadow of Der Fuhrer.

Below: Douglass MacArthur Triumphantly storms ashore with the newly captured Japanese spoon in hand. Vows to personally smack Hirohito over his yellow head with it.

Right: Distraught and in great anxiety after losing the Japanese spoon, General Tojo tried to commit suicide by shooting himself in the abdomen. Aides found him and were able to save his life. Upon hearing the news, Hirohito was quoted as saying "The sunofabitch won't get off that easy..."



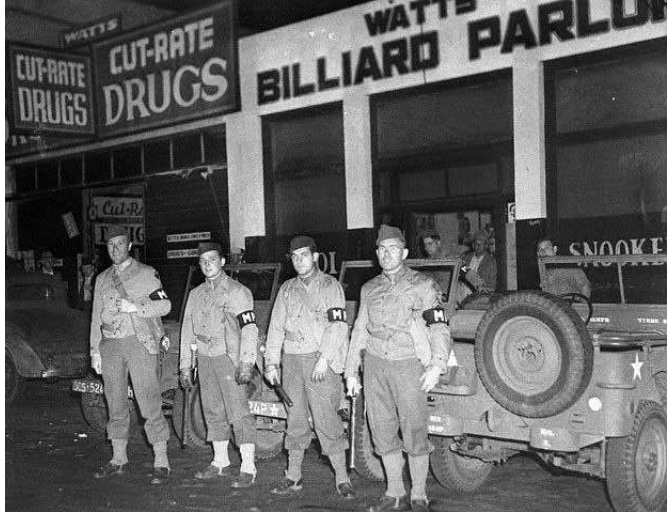
HOMEFRONT HEADLINES

Zoot suits riot!!

Near-martial law in L.A. riot zones!!



A group of Hispanic teenagers carry white flags and "surrender" at the Los Angeles central jail during the climax of the Zoot Suit Riots. Los Angeles saw a series of racially-motivated riots erupt between young Mexican Americans, dubbed "zoot suiters" due to their penchant for the trendy outfit, and Caucasian servicemen on leave from the war.



Watts was a hot spot area in the recent disorders. A truck filled with zooters was stopped by service men and "unloaded" amid flying fists. Police reserves stopped the fighting and sent seven of the juvenile zooters to the detention ward of the Georgia Street Receiving Hospital for investigation. Photo shows the Military Police on guard in Watts.

Two soldiers and a Negro zoot suiter were taken into custody after a riot at the corner of Second and Spring streets. And police, cruising throughout the city in scouting forays, dispersed mobs and hunted for others. Police ordered groups of more than three to "break it up" everywhere in the downtown area, and the presence of armed officers on every street resembled martial law rule. Two officers were stationed on every corner of Main, Spring, and Broadway, between First street and Pico blvd. Two more officers were in the center of each block

Squads of riot breakers, packed 18 to a truck, roamed the city, investigated mob reports, and arrested suspects. Traffic on Main st. was bumper to bumper, moving as slowly as city officials trying to solve the zoot suit problem.

Navy shore patrol officers and Army military police added to the martial law resemblance. They walked in and out of bars, dancehalls, drugstores and bus stations. They kept servicemen on the move and asked for proof of leaves and liberties.

One of the most serious outbreaks of terrorism occurred in Watts. Twelve Negroes ambushed a 17-year old white high school student, asked him if he was a "zoot-suiter" and when he said "no" the fight started. The victim, Joe M. Steddum of 8834 Banders st., received a five inch cut on his left forehead, requiring six stitches at the emergency hospital, 3060 Slauson st., to mend.

Surprise Hurricane Smashes Texas Coast

A massive hurricane struck the upper coastal and Galveston areas of Texas on July 27. Due to fears of German U-boats in the Gulf of Mexico, all ship's radio broadcasts were silenced and no advance warnings were given or received. Coastal Texas residents awoke that morning to high winds and heavy rains. Conditions only worsened as the day progressed until late in the day when the storm was in full effect.

Local newspaper accounts cite the storm as "the worst since 1915". At least 19 deaths were reported, and early damage estimates were in the range of \$15 to twenty million dollars.



Ouch — My dogs!

Watch your step, soldier

Stars and Stripes

THERE are two things that are capable of giving a soldier in combat plenty of grief, not counting the enemy. They are his feet.

In every campaign a large number of Joes always show up with dogs so sore as to knock them completely out of the running for awhile. That's not good, either. Nobody ever won a war while off in a hospital somewhere nursing a set of aching footsies.

A correct shoe fit is the first rule of good foot health any old time, and doubly so in the field where a guy lives much more intimately with his number twelves than he would ordinarily. If you think your shoes don't fit properly, bitch about it before it is too late. If supply gives you an argument, tell them you are a growing boy or something.

The fit of your socks is damned important, too, as you probably know if you ever have had to sweat out a wrinkle to the next break on a hike, as who hasn't? In combat it's worse, because you can't take ten to get things straightened out just when you want to. Blisters are an invitation to real trouble where you might have to let them go for awhile,

No guy can go to the front loaded down like a basement bargain counter, but he is a smart Joe who manages to line the top of his tin bonnet with an extra pair or two of socks, woolen. That comes straight from the boys who have fought from Africa to Italy, and it is no bum steer. Slide 'em

between the web straps and the liner.

There is nothing quite so lovely as having a couple of nice, dry socks to slap on alter you have been batting around in the soup for several hours on end. This is good not only for the feet; it makes you feel better all over, and helps to prevent chilling. Sort of like a pix of some beautiful doll.

Even if you have to put damp shoes right back on, the dry layer of wool helps one hell of a lot.

If the socks are clean as well as dry, so much the better. Granted, the battlefield is no place for worrying about whether you smell like a soap ad would have you smell, or not, and that's not the important consideration. What is important is that you don't bog down in the clutch with raw, sore feet.

Veteran fighters have found it advisable to stretch even a slim water ration to include a fast rinse for the socks, if at all possible.

They have also found the issue of foot powder to be good stuff if it is properly rued. Frequent light dusting of the feet with this powder is a lot more effective than just dumping it in the shoes once in a while.

Here's a parting shot on just how serious foot trouble can really be. There is a condition known as trench foot" which is related to frostbite and is similar to the "immersion foot" from which shipwrecked sailors often suffer. The moral is, pal: Take the best possible care of your feet that you can. Who the hell wants to limp down the Wilhelmstrasse?

Imagine this guy's surprise! His buddy turned out to be a Jap!

San Francisco, California—Woodrow Webb, 22-year old Marine from Wildwood, Nj, thinks this Solomon Islands adventure is funny. He decided to evacuate his machine-gun post in a hurry when a Jap mortar found the range. He and another guy, who rose up ouy of the inky jungle night, ran side by side and dropped simultaneously into a foxhole while the shells exploded around them. The young Gyrene was comforted by the presence of a buddy, but he was too breathless to say anything- which was very fortunate. During a lull in the shelling, Webb's companion spoke- in Japanese! Webb nodded his head but didn't answer. Stealthily, he reached for a grenade, slipped the pin out and cautiously slid it under the Jap's pack. Then, Webb said with a grin, "I got the hell out of there!"

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Alert doughboys live and learn

By Ralph Harwood, Warweek combat correspondent

WITH AN ADVANCE UNIT, Germany, Oct. 27 — An American combat unit, looking back on more than four months of tough fighting on the Continent since D-Day, has some worthwhile tips to pass on to those who have yet to face the enemy.

1/Lt. Earle Dooley, of St. Louis, Mo., said:

“The German soldier is tough and can fight but when I saw the first batch of Hitler Youth run screaming and crying from a flaming pillbox like a bunch of scared cats, I said to myself, ‘This Aryan and Superman business is strictly the bunk.’”

1/Lt. John A. Kulp, of Columbus, Ohio, is Dooley’s company commander. On one occasion Kulp’s company outmaneuvered two German strongpoints, killing scores of enemy soldiers and capturing more than 300 others without the loss of a single American life.

Kulp, Dooley, 1/Sgt. Jesse C. Benton, Charleston, S.C., and three of the top-ranking non-coms, T/Sgt. Elbert Baldwin, Orangeburg, S.C., and Sgts. Lowell Kennedy, Richmond, Ind., and Howard Clolinger, Mobile, Ala., agreed that the rules most important to remember when in combat with the Wehrmacht are:

Never Fire at Night

1 — Never fire at night except in cases of extreme emergency. You fire at night and you disclose your position. Sgt. Baldwin, with a small patrol, held up a force of more than 300 Nazis at night by holding his fire. Hours later help arrived and the Nazi force was wiped out.

2 — Junior officers and non-coms should be thoroughly familiar with the basic elements of map reading, Lt. Kulp said. “Maps available for the current campaign are very nearly perfect and there is no excuse for mistakes on the part of lead personnel.” Lt. Kulp cited several examples of units which became lost or confused due to inability of the leaders to read maps correctly.

Coordination Is Important

3 — All men should be marked by their companies for identification at night. This is vital to control of troops in night operations.

4 — Officers and non-coms should show leadership in the field. Lt. Kulp said that, contrary to manual instructions, he thinks platoon leaders should front the platoons in combat, with platoon sergeants in the rear. “The men should be made to feel that their officers are perfectly willing to assume the same risks the men are required to take. Then, and only then, can the officers begin their work coordinating the work behind the lines.”

5 — Men should dig L-shaped trenches which protect the individual against flat-trajectory anti-aircraft fire.

6 — Keep moving. Never stand in one spot. Sgt. Benton said that forward movement is good protection against 88 shell fragments.

Scare Stunts Don’t Work

7 — The Nazi brand of “scare warfare” is well organized, but Lt. Kulp’s men soon saw through it. On one occasion Lt. Kulp said, the Nazis tried to scare the men with shouts of “Come out you d— Yankees, and fight!” That was enough of a red flag to the boys in the company, most of whom come from South of the Mason-Dixon line. Speaking of the psychological effect of the “Burp gun” and the “screaming meemie” rocket gun, Lt. Kulp said that after the first encounter these weapons were of little use to the Germans. “Aside from the eerie sound, they aren’t especially dangerous to personnel,” Kulp said.

8 — Many German snipers have copied the Japanese sniper tactics and tie themselves to trees. The roads to Germany were flanked by dead German snipers, hanging in trees, their bodies riddled by Allied rifle fire.

9 — Sgt. Kennedy pointed out the dangers in soldiers in the front lines concerning themselves with the bigger phases of the battle while it is in progress, worrying over the success or failure of the unit. “The soldier on the line should be made to feel confident that the officers and non-coms are holding up their end

of the battle efficiently,” Sgt. Kennedy said. “It isn’t always possible for the leaders to keep the men posted on every movement and plan. It isn’t practicable for them to go from foxhole to foxhole drawing maps of the situation.”

All men in Lt. Kulp’s company agreed that the American GI, after his first fight, is superior to the Nazi fighting man.

Nazi prisoners gave the men a clear-cut picture of the effects of the Nazi psychology. Most of the prisoners were quite willing to give all information asked of them ... strength of units, disposition of their buddies and armament. Most of them were very happy to be prisoners and seemed rather disgusted with Hitler at this point.

A few of the Nazis, especially some of the officers, still stuck by Der Fuehrer and the Aryan way of thinking. The Americans were amused at their attitude. One Nazi officer, a colonel, refused to mount a prison truck because it was driven by a “non-Aryan,” an American Negro. His “Aryan” psychology took a back seat when an MP showed him a sharp bayonet and “looked mean.”

10 — The importance of remembering the basic training days at Benning or Bragg is brought out by this tip:

When on patrol, never report back in a group; always send one or two men back to make the report and the others remain to hold the ground.

One unit sent a patrol out near Brest to G-2, the situation on a German-held hill. They returned in a group to report that there were no Krauts to be seen, but when the company moved up there were heavy losses — the Nazis had moved up and dug in with their heavy weapons, mortars, and small arms. It wouldn’t have happened that way if that patrol had remembered to send back just one or two men to report. Just the way it reads in the manual is usually the best way, Joe.