

A YEAR AGO — TARAWA

By JOHN B. GARRETT, Sp. 1/c (Coast Guard Combat Correspondent)

A year ago the Marines hit Tarawa. They landed with high optimism; there wasn't a man among them who wasn't in high spirits, for they had seen the task force pour its heaviest shells into the island for interminably long hours. And they knew that the Army Air Force had been pounding the island for days with blockbusters and daisy cutters (antipersonnel bombs).

The contagious feeling of optimism was summed up by a corporal in a special weapons unit just before he slid down the sally net of the transport: "Man, I feel sorry for those yellow dogs on the island! Ringing in his ears were the final words of Marine Major Schoettl: "Hit the beach, boys, and give 'em hell!"

And the Marines of the 2nd Division did just that—but that 3-day assault, victorious in the end, resulted in more casualties, in relation to number of men involved, than the Marines had ever before suffered in a landing of this type.

From the bridge of the transport, we saw them through our binoculars, until smoke drifted over from the island and obscured them from view. When we could see them no longer, we went about our business on the boat. But suddenly the Japanese batteries opened fire and a greaser of water shot up ahead of us and quite close. Another went up aft. Our ship decided to circle out of range; then came back a short while later.

It was later estimated that about 1,000 Marines started that momentous assault—but it was only a small group of probably 200 to 300 men who waded through the graveyard of fire to the beach and seized control of a narrow strip.

This surviving group of men held the island alone and under frightful conditions, for most of the first afternoon. Behind them, in the sea, floated the bodies of hundreds of their buddies.

Back on the transport, we had started to receive casualties. The attitude and expression on the faces of these men revealed more than a thousand words could describe—they had been through the worst of nightmares.

It is impossible to describe lucidly or even coherently the course of the 3-day battle. I remember getting in a Higgins boat at noon the second day and hitting the Tarawa jetty under no worse than sporadic fire.

I lived on the island for two days and saw the Marines swoop victoriously over it. There were many unforgettable scenes—scenes which after a year still remain vivid in memory and are best forgotten. But out of that bloody shambles we came away with the knowledge that the road to Tokyo, no matter what obstacles it presents, will inevitably be traveled by American forces. For us, Tarawa was a bitterly won victory; for the Japs it was the handwriting on the wall.

Combat correspondents are always told not to overstate and to forego personal expressions of opinion, but here is one who, on this first anniversary of the battle of Tarawa, wants to let his hair down long enough to pay his respects to what is unquestionably one of the best and most gallant outfits of men this country has under arms today—the 2nd Division of the United States Marine Corps.

WOUNDED SOLDIER WAS WILLIAMSON STUDENT

Pvt. Fred W. Hall, 20, son of Mr. and Mrs. Jesse Hall, of Unionville, who last week was reported to have been slightly wounded December 1 in Germany, was serving in the infantry and was called for service August 28, 1942. He trained at Ft. Benning, Ga., and Camp Swift, Tex., and then he was sent to Ft. Dix, N. J., and then overseas, landing September 22 of this year.

Pvt. Hall attended Bellefonte High School for two years and had completed two years at the Williamson Trade School near Philadelphia in the spring of the year he entered service. He has two brothers also in service. They are Sgt. James Richard Hall, stationed at Kearney, Neb., and Pvt. Charles L. Hall, who left last week to begin Army training.

Wires Mother Roses

Pvt. Loraine Hugill, who is stationed at Fort Bliss, Texas, remembered his mother, Mrs. Nellie Hugill, of Phillipsburg, on her birthday by wiring her a dozen roses. Loraine is well and enjoying army life. He is in the anti-aircraft division of the U. S. Army.

Arrives in New Guinea

Mrs. Irvin Johnston, of Phillipsburg, has received word that her husband, Pvt. Irvin "Mose" Johnston, has arrived safely in New Guinea. He is a member of the U. S. Army Signal Corps.

HONOR ROLL

Graduate Pilot



Flight Officer Roscoe E. Harris, son of Mrs. Stella L. Harris, Bellefonte, R. D. 1, was awarded pilot's silver wings and appointed a Flight Officer in the Army Air Forces at graduation exercises held at Blytheville Army Air Field, Arkansas, recently. The winning of his wings marks the successful completion of three phases of flying training—primary, basic, and advanced.

In Air Corps



Pfc. Ray N. Hile is the son of Mrs. Fremont Hile of Pleasant Gap. He has been in the Air Corps two years and in that time has been stationed at the following places: Olmstead Field, Middletown, Pa.; Lockbourne A. B., Columbus, Ohio; Fort Dix, N. J.; Daniel Field, Augusta, Ga.; Robins Field, Macon, Ga.; and Fairmont A. B., Geneva, Neb.

Serving in Holland



Private Roy Buck, son of Mr. and Mrs. Roy Buck of Warriors Mark, was inducted into service in April, 1944. After training at Camp Croft, S. C., and Camp Meade, Md., he was sent overseas and landed in England on October 12. He is now stationed in Holland.

Serving in France



Corporal Edna Thompson, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. C. A. Thompson, of 135 North Allegheny street, Bellefonte, recently arrived in France. This Bellefonte service woman enlisted in the WAC at Altoona in February, 1943. She received her basic training at Daytona Beach, Florida. At the end of her basic training she was sent to Philadelphia. While there she belonged to the Anti-Aircraft Artillery Command and received training as a radio operator. In March, 1944, she spent a 15-day furlough at home and at the end of this period reported back to New York City for duty.

Pvt. James R. Immel No Longer in Hospital

A letter received this week from Pvt. James R. Immel, who earlier in the year had been wounded while on duty with the Signal Corps in Italy, states that he was discharged from the hospital last January 28, and is now in good physical condition. Although practically fit to resume service, Pvt. Immel has been stationed with the 52nd Station Hospital in Italy, on limited duty. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. James S. Immel of Snow Shoe.

Pleasant Gap Man Returns to Hawaii

Private First Class Robert L. Rodkey, son of Mr. and Mrs. Roy Rodkey, of Pleasant Gap, has been returned to an Army Air Forces base in the Hawaiian Islands after a 10-month tour of duty in the "Moc" islands. He has been assigned to duty in the personnel department headquarters of the Sixth Air Service Area Command.

Pfc. Dugan Receives Posthumous Awards

James E. Dugan, of Pike street, Bellefonte, recently received the Purple Heart decoration awarded posthumously to his son, Pfc. Norman T. Dugan, for military merit and wounds received by Pfc. Dugan resulting in his death on September 16, 1944.

Philipsburg Girl Reservist On Duty

Among the Women Reservists now on duty with the Navy in the nation's capital, releasing a man to fight at sea with the fleet, is Jane Ruth Pixley, S. 2 c., a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Pixley of Phillipsburg.

Gets Honorable Discharge

Gerald Lindsay, Bkr. 3 c., who has been stationed at the Newport, R. I., naval base for the past three months arrived at his home in Phillipsburg last Thursday with an honorable discharge due to injuries received in training. Gerald had been hospitalized for the past month and a half. He has been in the Navy for the past nine months. His wife and daughter, Sandra, and mother reside in Phillipsburg.

Lands in England

Mr. and Mrs. O. M. Griffith of Phillipsburg, have received word from their son, Sgt. Beam Griffith, that he has landed and is stationed somewhere in England. A son-in-law, Cpl. Joseph Hoffman, who had spent fourteen months in the Pacific theater of war, is now stationed in France.

Merrillale Soldier Wounded

Mr. and Mrs. Ernest A. Quick, of Merrilale, have just received word that their son, Sgt. Marvin W. Quick, was slightly wounded in action on November 29.

Clinton County Soldier Killed

War casualties in the Look Haven area over the weekend numbered three with one death and two injuries being reported.

Philipsburg Man Receives Promotion

Clarence E. Dawson, 29, of Phillipsburg, has been promoted from Sergeant to Staff Sergeant. It has been announced in England. S. Sgt. Dawson is an aircraft woodworker, engaged in maintenance and repairs on British-made Mosquitoes, planes that fly lone missions over the continent, gathering weather data and photographing German military targets before and after attacks by the Air Force heavies.

Prisoner of War Writes to Parents

Mr. and Mrs. W. E. Smith, of Locust Lane, State College, last week received the first direct word from their son, Staff Sgt. William F. Smith, since he was taken prisoner by the Germans on September 11. The card was written by Sgt. Smith on September 14, just three days after he was taken prisoner. He said, "I have been taken prisoner of war in Germany. I am in good health. We will be transported from here to another camp within a few days. Please do not write until I give you an address."

My Last Request

When I die please bury me Neath a ton of sugar under a rubber tree; Lay me to rest in a new auto machine. And water my grave with gasoline. —Billie.

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CHURCHES

Pleasant View Union Chapel

Rev. L. F. Sheets, pastor. Sunday school at 2:30 p. m. At 7 o'clock in the evening, a special Christmas service will be held, entitled "Iren Jesus Came." The service consists largely of singing. A message by the pastor and an appeal for souls will close the program. Everybody is cordially invited to attend. After this service our young people will join the Advent group in choral singing. This Thursday night prayer meeting in the chapel at 7:30.

Messiah Church

Rev. L. F. Sheets, pastor. 9:30. Sunday school, followed by a Christmas program; 7:30, Christian Endeavor. Our annual Watchnight service will be held at the church on Sunday night, Dec. 31, from 10 to 12:08 a. m., Jan. 1, 1945. At this service the young people will render a song service, entitled "Where Love Is." A sermon will be preached by Bro. William Rachau of Millsburg, associate pastor. Plenty of time will be given for prayer and testimony. Come and see the New Year in with us.

St. John's Lutheran, Bellefonte

Rev. Clarence E. Arnold, pastor. Fourth Sunday in Advent, December 24, 9:30 a. m., Sunday school; 10:45 a. m., the service, with the singing of the familiar carols by the congregation and a number of the lesser known by the choir; a sketch by Mrs. Ralph Dale and her Sunday school class, and an address on "My Soul Doth Magnify the Lord," by the pastor. 11 p. m., the Candlelight Vigil Service with the Junior and Senior Choirs of thirty-eight voices leading the music. An instrumental ensemble will play Christmas carols during the gathering of the congregation from 10:30 to 11 o'clock.

The pacifists enjoy their belief because brave men are willing to fight to protect them from enemies who would not hesitate to shoot them.

You Can Hear the Next War Coming

Keep your ears open when you read the next story about buzz-bombs striking London, Paris, or Antwerp. Keep your ears open and you'll hear the sinister motor-sounds of V-10 heading for New York, Chicago, Denver, and Detroit. V-10 exists today as surely as the 2-cylinder Cadillac existed when the Kissel Car was king of the road. It may have taken considerable German skill to develop the robot bomb which could be launched by one man from a land platform, airplane, or a boat-deck; which could fly 300 miles or so and blast a city block and its inhabitants into oblivion. But it won't take much German skill at all to improve that V-1 to the point where it will fly not 300 miles but 3,000. It is just a question of more fuel capacity and—smack!—there goes the corner of Main street and Vine.

They'll know that Germany has declared war on the United States. And they'll know that the United States has lost the war in the same instant. Then, with America out of the picture, Germany can proceed comfortably and safely to fight the kind of world war that she can win. If you're not sure how you would like such a war, glance at the nearest child and consider how it would look a quarter of a century hence as an adult smashed in one furious German instant to a pulp. Think this over before you decide how much of Germany's industry, how much of Germany's General Staff, how much of Germany's aggressive spirit you'd like to leave alive when this war is over.

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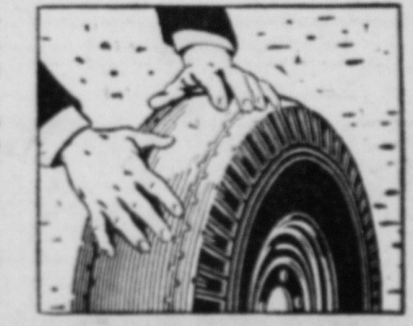
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