

## Hoosier Vagabond . . . By Ernie Pyle

**Editor's Note:** This, the 35th of the Ernie Pyle war dispatches we are reprinting while Ernie takes a rest, was written while he was recuperating from an illness in an army tent hospital.

**SOMEWHERE IN SICILY**, August, 1943.—It was flabbergasting to lie among a tentful of wounded soldiers recently and hear them cuss and beg to be sent right back into the fight.

Of course not all of them do. It depends on the severity of their wounds, and on their individual personalities, just as it would in peacetime. But I will say that at least a third of the moderately wounded men ask if they can't be returned to duty immediately.

When I took sick I was with the 45th division, made up largely of men from Oklahoma and west Texas. You don't realize how different certain parts of our country are from others until you see their men set off in a frame, as it were, in some strange faraway place like this.

The men of Oklahoma are drawing and soft-spoken. They are not smart-alecks. Something of the purity of the soil seems to be in them. Even their cussing is simpler and more profound than the torrential obscenities of Eastern city men. An Oklahoman of the plains is straight and direct. He is slow to criticize and hard to anger, but once he is convinced of the wrong of something, brother, watch out.

These wounded men of Oklahoma have got madder about the war than anybody I have seen on this side of the ocean. They weren't so mad before they got into action, but now they are.

And these quiet men of the 45th, the newest division over here, have already fought so well they have drawn the high praise of the commanding general of the corps of which the division is a part.

### She Missed Again

IT WAS these men from the farms, ranches and small towns of Oklahoma who poured through my tent with their wounds. I lay there and listened to what each one would say first.

One fellow, seeing a friend, called out, "I think I'm gonna make her." Meaning he was going to pull through.

Another said, "Have they got beds in the hospital? Lord how I want to go to bed."

## Inside Indianapolis By Lowell Nussbaum

**REPORTS OF** a mysterious animal—possibly a bobcat—roaming the countryside have discouraged folks living northeast of Clermont from being outdoors at night any more than necessary. All last winter, vague reports of such an animal were heard, and occasionally dogs would go whimpering home licking their wounds and looking as if they had been tangled with the granddaddy of all tomcats. Most everyone had heard rumors, but you couldn't find any one person who had seen the animal. The reports were confirmed, however, Saturday evening.

While searching for a missing dog, Paul C. Denny, of the Indianapolis Paper Container Co., saw the animal. He was walking along Eagle creek, just below 42d, at dusk, when he saw it approaching him. Paul, who admits he drinks nothing stronger than cokes, swears it was almost as large as a sheep, and had a long tail. It was definitely a feline. When it saw him, it turned and ran, bounding away with 10-foot leaps. Paul went away, too. If we only had a bale or two of catnip, maybe we could capture the bobcat to start an Indianapolis zoo. . . . That reminds us: Old Inside is going to have some interesting news before long for you folks who think our fair city needs a zoo. We aren't going to say too much about it now, but you'll be hearing more from us.

### It Rained Ducks

BERT LAY, formerly operator of a grocery at 38th and College, is getting ready to throw a duck dinner, we hear. Bert spent some time this summer and fall at his cottage on Lake Manitou. He doesn't hunt, but he decided to stay over there just to witness the recent opening of the duck season. He sat out in his front yard and watched the hunters get all set for the opening gun. Bang! went the first gun. Bang! went a hundred others. Plop, plop, plop, went the dead ducks as they fell in Bert's yard.

## America Flies

THE AIRCRAFT engineers have performed near miracles. They gave us high cruising speed and low landing speed.

Now facing them is the task of building planes to operate on one-runway airports. We cannot continue to build airports to fit airplanes any longer, and I doubt if we can afford to maintain those airports already built under such careless specifications.

I am sure the engineers can build airplanes that can operate off one-runway airports, irrespective of the wind direction.

The first step in such a program is to build a plane that can safely be landed and taken off crosswind. The current plane, with its rigid landing gear, renders such operation extremely dangerous. Landing a plane crosswind necessitates fighting the tendency of the plane to "weather vane" into the wind. The moment the wheels touch the ground they are subjected to a dangerously high side thrust, the result of which is usually a collapsed wheel and a nose-over or ground loop.

Suppose the plane were provided with a landing gear which could be adjusted, a controllable swivel affair to permit the pilot to estimate the ground drift due to the cross wind, set his angle for the landing gear, and hold his plane at the necessary angle into the wind.

### Too Much Daydreaming

EXPERIMENTS have been conducted with such a landing gear and it seems to hold great promise. But neither this development nor its necessity seems to have been sufficiently impressed on the leaders of aviation nor upon the taxpayer who has to foot the bill for the miles of concrete runways decorating orthodox airports.

There is a lot of daydreaming about a golden age soon to burst on us.

At first, it was millions of putt-putts—light low-power airplanes—some with folding wings to be fitted into a garage, run along the highways, and flown all over the place.

Then it was helicopters which upset the country.

Maybe the country is just determined to be upset about aviation and flying, and any excuse serves as a pre-charge for an emotional bonfire.

### One Thing Certain

THERE'S ONE THING certain, whether the current emotional wave of enthusiasm for aviation makes sense or not—America is going to fly. Of that I am convinced. What they are going to fly in, what they are going to fly for, or what they are going to pay for the flying with, is beyond me. But they are going to fly.

Every day my desk is flooded with questions about the extent of the post-war air market, airports, planes, instruments, air schools, landing strips, engines, gas and oil. No one knows the answers to these questions. There are, of course, regiments of self-ordained prophets who know all these answers.

There are only a mighty few lucky guessers who made real fortunes out of aviation, and they all made their killings in the 1920's. It takes money to fly. And if you have the money to buy the plane, you had better have some mighty sensible ideas about how you are going to earn money enough flying to pay for plane and engine upkeep and maintenance.

The only answer I feel safe in making to questions about the post-war aviation market is another question: You tell me what our post-war economic set-up will be, and I'll tell you something about post-war aviation.

"I am one of the American army officers who is attached for liaison and observation to the 2d British army civil affairs. It has been my recent privilege to talk with M. Paul Sion, mayor of Lens, member of the chamber of deputies of the republic of France. He was formerly a miner, and is of the Socialist party here."

"You perhaps know that the first week of this month it was a matter of military necessity that this city had to be very heavily bombed by Americans. They had suffered very much during previous bombardments and under the German heel, but the

people were greatly admired and loved here. It would be a splendid gesture, and a great builder of morale for a brave and hard-working industrial and mining people, if some city in the United States, particularly a mining city, were to assume this sponsorship."

Another said, "I'm hungry, but I can't eat anything. I keep getting sick at my stomach."

Another said: as he winced from their probing for a deeply buried piece of shrapnel in his leg, "Go head, you're the doc. I can stand it."

Another said, "I'll have to write the old lady tonight and tell her she missed out on that \$10,000 again."

Another, who was put down beside me, said, "Hi, Pop, how you getting along? I call you Pop because you're gray-headed. You don't mind, do you?"

I told him I didn't care what he called me. He was friendly, but you could tell from his forward attitude that he was not from Oklahoma. It turned out he was from New Jersey.

### Awful Aloneness

DYING MEN were brought into our tent, men whose death rattle silenced the conversation and made all the rest of us grave.

When a man was almost gone the surgeons would put a piece of gauze over his face. He could breathe through it but we couldn't see his face well.

Twice within five minutes chaplains came running. One of these occasions haunted me for hours.

The man was still semi-conscious. The chaplain knelt down beside him and two ward boys squatted alongside. The chaplain said:

"John, I'm going to say a prayer for you."

Somehow this stark announcement hit me like a hammer. He didn't say, "I'm going to pray for you to get well," he just said he was going to say a prayer, and it was obvious he meant the final prayer. It was as though he had said, "Brother, you may not know it, but your goose is cooked."

He said a short prayer, and the weak, gasping man tried in vain to repeat the words after him.

The dying man was left utterly alone, just lying there on his litter on the ground, lying in an aisle, because the tent was full. Of course, it couldn't be otherwise, but the awful aloneness of that man as he went through the last few minutes of his life was what tormented me. I felt like going over and at least holding his hand while he died, but it would have been out of order and I didn't do it. I wish now I had.

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How to Make Money

WE MADE THE not-to-be-snatched-at sum of 12 cents by our recent remark that "for 2 cents" we'd print the answer to a radio quiz question—the length of a fathom? Besides J. G. Moffitt, whose 2-cent worth we mentioned yesterday, pennies showered down on us from Morris E. Ferguson, Al Trinkle, an anonymous gent who sent four pennies, and another whose letter we seem to have mislaid. This is all a bit out of date, though, since we're told a woman correctly answered the question over the radio Saturday. From now on, we're going to try to keep out of trouble in this column. . . . Harry Kennedy, 1518 Tabor st., read about the folks who had trouble getting a sealer for tin cans in which to send Hoosier fried chicken to service men overseas. So he called to say tin cans aren't necessary. He and Mrs. Kennedy have been packing chicken in regular fruit jars, filling the jars with shortening, turning them upside down until the shortening congeals, and then shipping them overseas to their son, Pvt. Harry Kennedy. They get there in fine shape, too. The Kennedys pack the fruit jars in cotton. They got the idea from reading Ernie Pyle's story about a group of Kentuckians in Italy getting chicken that way regularly.

Harold Otis Burnett

Harold Otis Burnett, G. O. P. nominee for state representative, is a professional tax consultant.

A life-long resident of Perry township, he attended Southport high school and the University of Michigan.

Active in Republican politics here for many years, Mr. Burnett is now a G. O. P. precinct committeeman.

He lives on R. R. 6.

Glen L. Campbell

Glen L. Campbell, Republican nominee for state representative, has operated his own printing plant here since 1929.

Connected with the printing industry for 25 years, Mr. Campbell has served as secretary and president of the Lions club, and is a member of Lodge No. 669, F. & A. M., Sahara Grotto, Scottish Rite, Murat Shrine, Philoxenian Lodge No. 44, I. O. O. F., the Optimist club and the Methodist church.

Mrs. Nelle B. Downey

Mrs. Nelle B. Downey, Republican nominee for re-election as state representative, is a former Indianapolis school teacher.

Mrs. Downey served in the legislature during the 1941-1943 sessions.

She is a member of the Central Avenue Methodist church, the D. A. R., the Indianapolis Church Federation and the Community Fund board.

SUB WITH WINGS—

Navy Can Match,

Perhaps Surpass,

Nippon Tall Tales

By WILLIAM McGAFFIN

Time Foreign Correspondent

ABOARD ADM. MITSCHER'S FLAGSHIP, Task Force, Saturday, Oct. 21 (Delayed).—The Japanese radio has announced that Vice Adm. Marc A. Mitscher's flagship has been sunk. So this comes to you from the crowded bottom of Davey Jones' locker.

Perhaps you would like to know what it is like down here, some 30,000 feet below the surface.

FIRST OF ALL, our typewriter writers find in salt water.

Secondly, the food is excellent.

We had hot cakes with maple syrup for breakfast.

Maybe you wonder how we manage to get a plane off our flight deck when we are lying on the bottom some six miles down.

WELL—SH-H-H—don't repeat this to a soul: But we have a new secret weapon. We have a submarine with wings. It gurgles to the surface with its wings folded.

THE HOOTS that went up from our carrier when Jap reports came in could have been heard in Tokyo.

"Hey, fellows, we've been sunk again," a young gob yelled to his buddies. One of them answered him:

"Yeah—you're a ghost now—I don't recognize you."

IT HARDLY needs to be said that not a single ship has been lost in this, Adm. William F. Halsey and Vice Adm. Marc A. Mitscher's daring sea-air offensive. We have only one worry—that our families may be momentarily concerned by these bald-faced Japanese lies.

"He asked me if I would write to you for him (since the civil mail does not yet operate) to ask this favor: That you should ask some city or group of cities in the United States to act as sponsor or godfather to this city of Lens. He wants only moral and spiritual backing and approval for his plan for the renaissance of Lens—he is not seeking his loans or material."

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