SEEING THE 'BIG HEAYE' FOR HIMSELF, MR. CHURCHILL drove in an armoured car through ruins Xanten to cross the Rhine and watch troops of the British 3rd Army in action in areas still under enemy fire. In the uniform of a Colonel of the Royal Sussex Regiment he visited the 1st Division, which is composed largely of English county regiments, with battalions from Scotland and Northern Ireland. During his trip (disclosed on March 26, 1945) a shell exploded only 50 yards from him.
Desperate Last Stands Routed by Russians

AT DANZIG, where Nazi forces made a desperate stand, big guns (1) in the dockyards are being examined by a Soviet officer. After the great Baltic port had been secured by Marshal Robesovsky's 3rd Ukrainian Front, German women loaded the guns and abandoned them to the Soviets on March 20, 1945. German women loaded the guns and abandoned them to the Soviets on March 20, 1945. German women loaded the guns and abandoned them to the Soviets on March 20, 1945. German women loaded the guns and abandoned them to the Soviets on March 20, 1945.

At Kueners, on the Oder 40 miles from Berlin, men of Marshal Timoshenko's 2nd Ukrainian Front patrolled the streets of the town (2), which they took on March 1. On his way through a Czech village, a mounted Red Army reconnaissance officer of Marshal Malinovsky's 2nd Ukrainian Front was wounded (3). Marshal Zhukov, command- ing the 3rd Ukrainian Front, captured the centre of Vienna on April 5, after bitter fighting, and penetrated the important Sembner Pass, only 108 miles from Hitler's Berghof at Gaden, east.
HOW THE TIDE OF BATTLE SWEEPED INTO GERMANY

by Captain NORMAN MACMILLAN, M.C., A.F.C.

I visited a R.A.F. Casualty Air Evacuation Unit in Belgium that was formed in November 1944, Commanding it was Wing Commander J. Clarke Taylor, graduate of Glasgow University, a R.A.F. regular M.O. The unit has three flights, with the H.Q. and B Flights at one Belgian aerodrome and A Flight at another. This unit evacuates patients from eight base hospitals. Squadron Leader J. G. M. McMurchy of Manitoba is O.C. B Flight. Each Flight has one Senior Nursing Sister with the equivalent rank of Flight Lieutenant and three Nursing Sisters with the equivalent rank of Flying Officer. There are three doctors per Flight, and each Flight has an operating theatre.

DE-LOUSING WOUNDED PRISONERS is a regular operation in the Allied advance into Germany. This military hospital at Lies, on the Belgian frontier, is operated by German medical military experts who work under U.S. direction. (Photo, U.S. Air Force)

From an Advanced Landing Ground type of evacuation centre in Holland severe cases are evacuated direct by air to the U.K. Light cases fly back to Belgium, go into Base Hospital for treatment, and are kept in base hospital if they can recover within 31 days. At the base hospital the Medical Air Liaison Officer makes arrangements for the more serious cases to be evacuated thence by air to the U.K. The Unit made a record in transporting one casualty from the front line to U.K. hospital in 12 hours. But a pararesponder holds the absolute record. He was shot while in the aircraft, went back to the end of the line and in due course flew home in the same plane.

The forward shuttle between Holland and Belgium began in mid-September 1944, and is carried out by Handley Page Harrows converted to Sparrows. This flying unit, known officially as the Sparrow Flight, has six aircraft, one of which had been damaged by flak, and the first pilot and one of the wounded passengers hit. In command is Squadron Leader I. C. Marison, of Edin­burgh. The main evacuation is carried out by Dakota air transports. The aircraft carry 13 lying and seven sitting cases, and on their return journey fly in blood stores, stretchers, and other articles. They do not bear the Red Cross, because they must be used for the carriage of men or stores not within the Convention. There are no Red Cross aircraft; as such, in Europe, although the R.A.A.F. has Red Cross aircraft in the Far East. This C.A.E.U. can reach a peak of 500 cases per Flight per day—a total capacity for dealing with 1,500 cases daily. In the main airfield casualty clearing ward men lay in rows on stretchers waiting for the ambulances to take them to the Dakotas. Their stretchers stood high off the floor on the special steel stands (those made in Belgium) that are now used in the field for stretchers. I spoke to one of the men. He smiled. It was a sad smile. Yes, he was glad to be going home, but he had not expected to be going home like this. “How did you expect to go home?” I asked. “On my own pins,” he said. Poor fellow! He was an amputa­tion case. But, in an earlier war, he might never have gone home at all.

The ambulances ran up close alongside the aircraft. Orderlies lowered the upper stretchers to the floor of the ambulances with smooth operating winding-gear, lifted the stretchers out carefully and carried them the few yards to the open door in the side of the Dakotas. They were lifted in manually and placed in position in tiers of three on either side of the tunnel-like interior of the aluminium alloy fuselage. Sitting cases were helped up the companion that the aircraft carries for ordinary passengers. Each Dakota had a W.A.A.F. Air Ambulance Orderly, quietly going about her work of seeing that all her patients were comfortably settled. During the flight she can provide food or drink, administer morphia or oxygen as required. They seemed to like their work, and take pride in it. One I spoke to had completed 43 trips and flown 200 hours, duty of her logbook.

All kinds of patients come to the air ambulances from the C.A.E.U. One of the ladies of the Sadler’s Wells Ballet company contracted anthrax trouble, and as a member of E.N.S.A. was treated in the base hospital and then sent home by air. The big batch in the fuselage is closed. The engines start. The ambulance axis to the end of the runway, rises and climbs away above our heads. An hour later the casualties will be passing over England, soon to be landed on their destination airfield.

WHERE the Allies First Broke Into the Reich

We entered Holland by crossing the swollen river over a wood and pontoon bridge, for the original bridge lay wrecked in the Maas. The Germans had evacuated Belgium too rapidly for much damage to be done to the towns and villages by fighting, and the first badly damaged place I saw was Sittard, Dutch Limburg town of 15,000 inhabitants.

We were then on our way to the active front, and visiting the sector where the first bitter fighting took place on German soil, the area between the Maas and Roer rivers, from Aachen in the south to Roermond in the north. Here stands Sittard in the coal­mining district of Holland. The slag heaps made familiar pyramids. Underground the mine galleries continue across the frontier into Germany, and at that time the farther shafts and galleries were in German hands, so that it was impossible to work the Dutch seams; this undoubtedly aggravated the coal situation on the Continent, and must have had an adverse reaction on the coal situa­tion in Britain.

It was past midday and we stopped at a hotel, where we could drink coffee and eat or drink—no tea, no coffee, no beer. Fortunately we carried sandwiches in the car. Continuing along a narrow road we crossed the frontier into Germany. In Hengelo, a small agricultural village, there was not a house undamaged; roofs and floors were fallen in, and trash lay about the ground; the air was filled with the horrid odour of

ON THE SOUTHERN FLANK OF THE REICHSWALD FOREST, Captain Norman Macmillan (centre), Special Correspondent for "The War Illustrated" with the British Forces, watches a fine black Labrador search for mines with Sapper Robert Coote. In the background a transport column, including a Bailey bridge in sections, waits to move up. Nearly 3,000 dogs of various breeds are used by the Royal Army Signals for Dog Training School at Aldershot, in a 350-acre training ground. Men who are to handle them in action are trained alongside the minesweeping dogs, and battlefield conditions are realistically reproduced. See also page 186.
burnt-out homes. Heinsberg, two miles from the Roer river, was worse. It was smashed up, not just knocked down. (Heinsberg, Dieren and Jülich were bombed by Bomber Command in daylight on November 15, 1944, the first support of its kind given to U.S. forces.) Heinsberg had the appearance of having been burgled, an effect created by the evacuation of the place by its former inhabitants, who had fled deeper into Germany, taking what possessions they most

fell when someone fled. Among a road block of military vehicles held up by mud more than ankle deep amid treacherous bomb-and-shell-holes, I saw a solitary German woman civilian walking through the village; it was the short daytime period free from curfew.

When such villages are captured, German civilians, who remain behind, usually in hiding, are sorted out. They are examined, interrogated, but when it was safe to allow it some of them were given permission to return to their homes.

It struck me how few birds were to be seen. In the course of a whole day I saw only three magpies and four crows. I saw no song birds anywhere in Holland, and few in Belgium. Whether they had migrated in search of food, or had themselves been killed for food, I cannot say, but only in the desert have I before travelled so far and seen so few birds.

The only wild animals I saw over a wide area were two hares.

Just ahead, above the Roer river, little Auster planes were spotting amid clustering flak bursts; higher up a big formation of Thunderbolt fighters came west returning from a mission. United States troops were taking over from British in that sector. In the wide space of a harrowed field an American A.A. battery was setting up its 90-mm. gun. Many of the men came from the north-eastern States and preferred the dry cool of the period of snow and frost to the damp weather that had followed. A tiny white puppy gambolled about one gun platform; they called him Snowflake.

Taking a short cut, we struck more than ankle deep in the mud of a road that had been but a farm road before war swept over it, and had a hard job to reach Sittard again, recognizing our direction from the fighter that had belly-loaded in a field where unknown mines lay still buried; this is one of the hazards of the modern forced-landing in time of war.

We passed over the magnificent Juliana Canal to reach Susteren, Dutch town less than two miles from the German frontier and three from Maastricht in Belgium, at the narrowest part of the Maastricht appendix. Here several houses were newly damaged, and their Dutch owners were removing their belongings and taking them back on horse-drawn vehicles. From Maastricht we wanted to go to Weert, but the direct road was too badly damaged by frost, flood and traffic, and in the growing dusk our Humber car roared away up the fine road towards Roermond, a Dutch town then in German hands, on the further side of the confluence of the Roer and Maas. A short distance from the river we turned off for Weert where the canal was dry and barges and boats were stranded on the canal bed.

ON THEIR WAY TO HUNTER, troops of the U.S. 17th Airborne Division clustered on Churchill tanks of the 6th Guards Armoured Brigade, manned by British crews. The town fell to both divisions on April 2, 1945, deprivings the enemy of the vital group of fighter airfields in the Rhine-Plüderath-Denikirich triangle, previously battered by the 11 T.A.F. (Photo, British Newspaper Photo)

FIELD-MARSHAL MONTGOMERY ADDRESSED HIS MEN OF THE 6TH AIRBORNE DIVISION when he visited troops of the 31st Army Group on the Roer front on April 3, 1945. On the Roer front Montgomery talked to General Sir L. M. B. Crerar on April 1, 1945. Both were on the Lower Rhine front in March to see the progress made by ground forces. Here Montgomery and General Crerar are shown in a picture taken on the Lower Rhine front in March. (Photo, British Official)
THE BATTLE FRONTS


W hile the Allied armies across the Rhine deep in the heart of Germany, and with prisoners daily coming in by the thousand, it would seem that any day now the enemy must accept the inevitable. I am quite sure that the mass of the German Army and the great majority of its officers realize that it is useless to prolong the struggle, yet until they are prepared, and in a position to turn their weapons if necessary against the fanatical minority it would be over-optimistic and dangerous to believe the end is in sight.

Sporadic resistance unless suppressed by the Germans themselves is almost certain to continue, and there is always the possibility that a substantial force composed of diehard troops may be withdrawn into the more inaccessible and defensible parts of the country. It has, however, become evident that the Volksgrenadiers is not likely to make an important contribution towards continued resistance, and I suspect that one of the main aims of Allied strategy is to prevent the retreat of any organized force into mountain strongholds.

Why, for instance, have Zhukov’s and Koniev’s main armies not yet resumed their march on Berlin? It is clear to me that Koniev is in a position of readiness, except so far as Beslau blocks one of his main lines of communication. The German Fall should be prevented, and that cannot be the reason for delay. Zhukov has certainly established a beachhead across the Oder, but we may be sure that he has made no attempt to break out from them or we should have heard of it from German sources even if Moscow as usual made no announcement until the event of the battle was certain. To my mind, of course, it is pure speculations. The delay in the development of the Russian attack towards Berlin indicates a timing programme arranged between the High Command of the Eastern and Western Fronts: Zhukov and Koniev, standing poised, contain the bulk of what remains of the German armies, and every day the Allied offensive in the west is being successfully carried on behind it, making retreat southwards increasingly difficult.

In particular, General Eisenhower’s southern wing operating in the Main and Neckar valleys threatens a break into the valley of the upper Danube which, on the other side Tolbukhin and Malinovsky are pressing up its middle reaches. These encircling arms are still 300 miles apart, but an advance of about 100 miles by the latter to Regensburg and by Zhukov of the same distance to Linz would cut the main lines of communication of this German northern armis with the projected fortress region of the south.

Meanwhile, the advance of Eisenhower’s southern wing against northern forces makes it increasingly difficult for the enemy in the north to disengage without exposing the rear andocompanied by the threat facing Zhukov and Koniev. If the Germans, therefore, contemplate withdrawing to the south on a large scale, the danger of their movement becomes greater and every day a break-through by Zhukov and Koniev on the flank of a retreating army would promise more decisive results than if effected prematurely. That is why I think they are hiding their time, waiting for the moment at which they can strike most effectively. There may also be political motives which render it advisable that Russian armies should not advance beyond the zone of occupation assigned to them, and perhaps it is desirable that Berlin should be entered simultaneously by the combined forces of the Allies. Changes in the machinery of control might thus be avoided.

E NEMY’S Best Available Troops Assembled to Oppose Crossing

Montgomery’s crossing of the Rhine was effectuated after deliberate and meticulous preparation with the knowledge that the enemy had assembled all his best available troops to oppose it. No precautions could be neglected, and in particular it was essential that a bridgehead once secured should rapidly be reinforced in strength. Immediate deep penetration was of less importance. As a consequence when the moment for a break-out from the bridgehead arrived there were ample troops to support the thrusts, and bridges available.

General Patton’s crossing, on the other hand, was only made possible by his annihilation of the enemy’s forces on the western bank in the Saar-Moselle triangle, which left the line of the Rhine in this sector practically undefended. His crossing was hardly opposed, and his armoured spearheads were able to make deep penetrations before encountering serious opposition: consequently there was no need to establish a secure bridgehead. But few bridges could be established immediately, and it took time for his main bodies to close up and for communications to develop. His spearheads made amazing progress in an initial foray across the country through which any delay might have enabled resistance to be organized, but as was to be expected, was resistance encountered a pause became necessary. It was, in the circumstances, of surprisingly short duration, but thereafter its rate of progress became less spectacular.

In General Hodges’ snap capture of the bridge at Remagen there was no question of selecting the point of crossing, and although the enemy was completely surprised, his resistance soon materialized. It was necessary, therefore, as in Montgomery’s case, to fight for a bridgehead and to fill it with troops before a breakout could be attempted. But since, unlike Montgomery, General Hodges had no adequate bridging equipment available, the building up of his bridgehead took much longer. By the time he was ready to advance, however, General Patton’s operations to the north and Montgomery’s in the north had greatly reduced the enemy’s power of resistance so that Hodges’ armoured thrusts were almost as spectacular as those of Patton.

What is remarkable is that these three crossings, involving operations of very different types, were all executed by men who have been so admirably co-ordinated. The enemy nowhere was able to make a properly organized stand, and that is largely due to the degree of coordination that was achieved. On the contrary, it was the enemy who suddenly found himself in a position of being so overextended in the Ruhr and unable to escape from it before the pincers closed round him. Every credit should, of course, be given to the commanders of individual armies, or groups of armies, for the manner in which they dealt with their special problems, and I cannot believe that any undue disadvantages were foreseen in the planning of the offensive would have prevented such a well-balanced picture if the highest co-ordinating authority, presumably General Eisenhower, had not retained control and been able to control the operations by his subordinates. A healthy rivalry of each other is a thing that is never appears to be detrimental to the rapid development of well-conceived plans. Discipline in the highest ranks was well maintained and, especially where Allied headquarters were in close cooperation, it was not easy to achieve.

The same spirit of loyalty and cooperation has been displayed by Marshal Stalin’s subordinate commanders. It has been from the enemy’s side that rumours of quarrels and dissent have come and the list of high commanders whom Hitler has removed is long, although we may well believe that their suspensions were due to justifiable protests against the Fuehrer’s strategic conception. The old saying that “the fish gets rotten from the head” has seldom been more fully exemplified. But the processes of decay and disintegration of the army have probably been much more rapid but for the fanatical devotion of the German officer class.
ENTIRELY NEW AMPHIBIOUS TECHNIQUE was brilliantly executed by British and U.S. Naval Forces to help the Allied crossings of the Rhine. A fast cross-river service to carry tanks, bulldozers and mobile guns had to be established before bridges of a temporary nature could be thrown across. Royal Navy's craft consisted of L.C.M.s (Landing Craft Mechanised) and L.C.V.P.s (Landing Craft Vehicle Personnel); and these huge vessels, to operate 200 miles from the sea, had mostly 16 be transported over hundreds of miles of damaged roads.

The L.C.M. is a 50-ft. all-steel boat, with a crew of five and speed of 12 knots, weights 26 tons, can carry any armoured vehicle up to a Sherman tank, or 6,000 81-mm. mortars, or 250 100-mm. shells, or 7,500 gallons of petrol. The L.C.V.P. is 56 ft. long, with crew of four, speed of ten knots, weights nine tons, and can carry 50 combat-equipped troops, one bulldozer, or one 105-mm. infantry cannon and one 57-mm. anti-tank gun, or two 75-mm. howitzers, or 1,200 gallons of petrol in five-gallon cans.

These had to be launched mostly from destroyers, and maneuvered against strong currents. Operations were under the overall direction of Admiral Sir Harold M. Burrough, K.C.B., K.C.E., D.S.O., Allied Naval C-in-C. of the Expeditionary Forces.

BRITISH NAVAL OFFICERS conferred in a Rhineland forest while organizing the momentous crossings. The senior officer of the British Naval Unit was Commander Joiner (1, centre). This base was administered by Royal Marines, and craft from it were soon operating. Ratings feed a hand in lowering a landing vessel into the Rhine (2) by means of a powerful mobile derrick.

The White Ensign flew as a capstan of the Royal Army Service Corps directed the crossings through a microphone (3). In the background British engineers were building a Bailey bridge. With a depth charge (4) that is set off from a naval vessel (5) to blow up mines and enemy-laid explosive intended to blow up our pontoon.
Armed with the action in the East China Sea in mind, it becomes clear that the setting sun is now a more appropriate emblem for the Imperial Japanese Navy than the rising sun, which has hitherto constituted its flag. It is difficult to follow the conception of strategy which induced the Japanese High Command to order sea on that date a weak and unbalanced naval force, destined of any form of air cover, when powerful Allied fleets were known to be within striking distance. In the case of H.M.S. Prince of Wales and Repulse, in December 1941, the situation was such that grave risks had to be taken by the British admiral in the hope of intercepting enemy transports; but no such considerations existed to influence the enemy on April 6.

Late in the afternoon of that day a strong force of Japanese aircraft attacked Allied ships and shore installations in the vicinity of Okinawa. Though attacks were pressed home with desperation, they were successful only to the extent of sinking three U.S. destroyers. Damage was inflicted on other destroyers, and a vessel was set on fire. In the result of the energetic counter-measures taken, 53 enemy planes were brought down by American fighters and 61 by the anti-aircraft guns of the fleet. By the evening the attack had been definitely defeated.

JAPANESE Admiral's Folly Was Exploded by Allied Forces

No sea activity appears to have been detected at this stage; but early next morning American reconnaissance aircraft observed the battleship Yamato, a cruiser of the Agano class, one other small cruiser and a number of destroyers, passing to the southward of Kyushu, the westernmost island of Japan, on a W. or S.W. course, towards the East China Sea.

Possibly reports from the survivors of the previous day's air attack had persuaded the Japanese admiral that the Allied forces had been rendered incapable of dealing a serious blow at his weak and ill-balanced force. Even so, it was the height of folly to have neglected to provide for contingencies by ordering land-based aircraft to keep in close touch with the force in case of need.

Naturally on April 7 it becomes evident that by the U.S. Commander-in-Chief, who at once dispatched a fast force of aircraft carriers, under Vice-Admiral Marc Mitscher, in the direction of the enemy. Contact was established about noon, when Admiral Mitscher's aircraft began a series of intensive attacks on the Japanese. Anti-aircraft fire from the Yamato and her consorts was intense, but there was no sign of air opposition. Hit by about eight torpedoes, besides bombs and rockets, the Yamato ultimately sank at a spot some 50 miles south-west of Cape Satainami, the southernmost point of Kyushu. This would be somewhere to the westward of Yukashima, one of the largest of the group of islands extending in a S.W. direction from Kyushu. Both the enemy cruisers and three of their destroyers were sunk in action with the American aircraft, and three more destroyers were on fire when last seen.

News of this defeat was received by Japan's new premier, 77-year-old Admiral Suzuki, with the gloomy statement that "this defeat has come to its most important and crucial stage and warrants not only the most solemn and clear expression of our nation's policy and the peaceful negotiations which have been going on in the recent past."

Certainly the chances of the fleet being able to do much to help the country out of its troubles seem to be slender. By the loss of the Yamato and her consorts in the last battle, the only modern battleship left after the sinking of the Musashi in the battle for Leyte last October, it is calculated that Japan's naval strength is reduced to five old battleships, the Nagato, Hyuga, Isé, Haruna and Kongō; five or six aircraft carriers; about ten cruisers; and a doubtful number of destroyers. Any one of the several main divisions in which the Allied fleets in the Pacific are organized should be capable by itself of dealing with the entire Japanese Navy in its present plight.

Though the enemy defeat was inevitable, it certainly would not have come so swiftly had it not been for the ineptitude with which naval operations have been conducted by our Eastern foes. How far the supremacy of the Army in the conduct of affairs may have contributed to this is not known; but instances of mismanagement are plentiful. Thus, after the sinking of H.M.S. Hermes, Dorsetshire and Cornwall in April 1942, the Japanese fleet was withdrawn from the Indian Ocean just as it seemed possible that it might succeed in enveloping and destroying Admiral Sir James Somerville's hastily collected force. The backbone of that force, as the admiral has since stated, was composed of the four slow and somewhat antiquated battleships of the Royal Navy, now clear.

In its various engagements with United States forces in the Solomon Islands area, the Japanese Navy never concentrated in full strength, with the result that its substance was gradually frittered away in side-shows. When it came to a full-scale engagement, in the Philippines last October, enemy forces arrived on the scene separately from different directions and were each beaten in turn. In short, Japanese naval strategy has been found wanting on nearly every occasion of critical importance.

WARSHEIPS Transferred by U.S. and Britain to Soviet Navy

Messages from Moscow recently disclosed the fact, already known to a great many people in this country and the United States, that these two countries last year transferred a number of warships to the Soviet Navy under Lend-Lease arrangements. Originally it had been suggested that some of the ships of the Italian Navy surrendered in November 1943 should be transferred to the Russians; but the latter apparently had more confidence in British and American ships.

Ships which were transferred are under- listed:
- two destroyers have included the battleship Royal Sovereign, of 29,150 tons, launched in 1915; she had been earmarked for replacement when war began, but is a powerful and well-protected vessel. The principal American ship presented is the 7,050-ton cruiser Milwaukee, launched in 1921. These two ships have been renamed Arkhangelsk and Murmansk respectively. Eight destroyers of the American flush-deck design, which were given to this country in 1940 in exchange for the lease of a number of Atlantic bases, have also passed into Russian hands. They are believed to include the Lincoln and St. Albans, which until recently operated under the Norwegian flag, and six others of similar type. They are now known as the Derzki—Audacity—class.
- Several British submarines of the Ursula type, of 540 tons, are also said to have been included in the transfer; they are now known as the Pembuka—Bee—class. Another submarine of a slightly larger design, the 627, has been given to Russia. A dozen or more motor torpedo boats, 12 steel submarine chasers, 70 wooden submarine chasers, and a number of wooden minesweepers have been acquired from the United States Navy.
Men Who Planned the Great Airborne Landings

**Glider Train Was 100 Miles Long**

When the mighty Allied airborne armies descended east of the Rhine on March 24, 1945, Hamilcar gliders and Halifax tow-craft (1) lined up on an R.A.F. airfield in England ready to take off. Curtis Commandos (C-46, type 2, carrying 36 paratroopers) instead of the Dakota were employed for the first time. This 4,000-h.p. superdragster can cover a speed of over 250 m.p.h. and can lift almost 6 tons; it drops paratroop troops from both sides simultaneously. (See also, p. 161, Vol. 6).

Col. G. J. S. Chatterton (1), commanding the Glider Pilot Regiment, evolved the new plan for the glider attack on the Rhine defences. Air Vice-Marshal Wyvill-Streett (1), R.A.F., was given the vital role for the Rhine airborne operations. Gliders downed in (2) parachute troops prepared for action (3) north of Wesel.

*Photos, British Official, Newspapers, Fort, Navy Chronicle.*

---

**GLIDER TRAIN WAS 100 MILES LONG** when the mighty Allied airborne armies descended east of the Rhine on March 24, 1945. Hamilcar gliders and Halifax tow-craft (1) lined up on an R.A.F. airfield in England ready to take off. Curtis Commandos (C-46, type 2, carrying 36 paratroopers) instead of the Dakota were employed for the first time. This 4,000-h.p. superdragster can cover a speed of over 250 m.p.h. and can lift almost 6 tons; it drops paratroop troops from both sides simultaneously. (See also, p. 161, Vol. 6).

Col. G. J. S. Chatterton (1), commanding the Glider Pilot Regiment, evolved the new plan for the glider attack on the Rhine defenses. Air Vice-Marshal Wyvill-Streett (1), R.A.F., was given the vital role for the Rhine airborne operations. Gliders downed in (2) parachute troops prepared for action (3) north of Wesel.

*Photos, British Official, Newspapers, Fort, Navy Chronicle.*
From the Skies Into Action Beyond the Rhine

WHEN TROOPS OF THE BRITISH 6TH AIRBORNE DIVISION descended east of the Rhine, north-west of Wesel, on March 24, 1945, in the Allies' greatest airborne operation, men and mechanism were ready for instant action: immediately on touching-down this quick-firing gun (1) left its glider. Airborne troops prepared to dash into blazing Hamminkeln (2), between Renz and Wesel, which they captured within a few hours. Two of our men inspected a sign-post outside the town (3), while civilians quietly submitted to a round-up (4).
With Our 7th Armoured Division in the West

The Fuehrer's Face as Their Trophy, doughty warriors of the British 7th Armoured Division relaxed (1) at Gemam, Westphalia, which they entered during a forcible breakthrough on Western Front news. Against the background of a village church near Badenbroek occupied April 1, 1945, heavy armour took up position (2) as our men picked off stray snipers (3). An upturned kitchen stove (4) served as cover at Badenbroek during the final clearance of this North Rhine town on March 28.
Dortmund-Emms Canal Now a Negligible Ditch

BRITISH 4th AIRBORNE DIVISION crossed the famous 150-miles long Dortmund-Emms canal, ten miles south of Osnabruck, on April 2, 1945, after retreating Nazis had destroyed all the bridges. Thanks to persistent draining of the canal by heavy bombers of the R.A.F., the water was only knee-deep, as this photograph of airborne troops transporting a wounded companion shows. Major-Gen. E. L. Bolst (inset), Commander of the 4th Airborne Division, is one of the youngest of our generals.

PAGE 779

Photo, British Official, Newpaper Pool
In occupied Holland nothing is normal. Improvisation, soul-numbing weariness and dreariness and hunger are afflictions common to all—whilst the people wait, with anguished patience, the day of liberation.

A Dutch correspondent in that Nazi-oppressed land writes specially for "The War Illustrated," in early April, indicates how you would spend your day if there.

Fortunately, somewhere in the neighbour- hood a house has collapsed and you have been able to buy some firewood. This has swallowed up the last of your savings. Or you have felled a tree or taken down a fence. One of your friends did a neat job: he pulled a couple of heavy wooden posts out of the ground in front of a shelter used by the German military. For weeks these have stood in his living-room to dry. Anyone stealing wood is immediately shot ... officially, but one often 'gets away with it.'

But you have no choice—you must have fuel to prepare your food. You will probably not go to work, because business and industry are virtually paralyzed.

Your water main is clogged. How long shall we have our water supply? In many places the water has been cut off for several hours in the day.) The plumber comes only when you offer him a sandwich or a cup of soup. That means he does not come. But you will have to see him today. Perhaps he will come when you give him a darning needle which your wife can spare.

Then you go with your pan to the communal kitchen. You get a spoonful of soup or mashed greens and potatoes for each member of your family. Soup? This usually consists of water with a few green pieces floating in it and sometimes a slice of carrot. Soup is a delicacy compared with the mashed greens and potatoes, as the never-failing sugar-beet gives them a sickly sweet taste. Moreover, the family's digestive organs can no longer cope with these indigestible turnips.

There are no potatoes. You have surrendered your ration vouchers to the communal kitchen. Yesterday you had a violent argument with the man in the flat above, who maintained that the municipal food office give you less than you should have. You have denied it, because the communal kitchen is a Dutch institution and not a German one. Moreover, the municipal food office deals extensively in the black market.

In the afternoon you and a friend plan to make a trip in North Holland, about 50 miles. You still have a blue suit, which you may be able to exchange for wheat. You become very angry because you have heard that a certain farmer has sold wheat. The sconned asked approximately £30 for 4 bushels. Fortunately, one morning the "underground boys" gave him the biggest hiding of his life.

You still have a bicycle, in spite of requisitions made by the Germans and the "Landwacht." But you have no tires. Six months ago you could get pneumatic tires for about £4 each. You thought it too expensive, but you are sorry now. Then you tried it with wooden tires, but that is worse than riding on the rim. Suppose you get the wheat, how are you going to carry it? The best plan for you and your friend will probably be to hire a barrel and to take turns in sitting on it and pushing it.

Bulls Fried in Oil for Supper

The relief organization instituted by the churches has distributed bulbs. You have also got a couple of pounds (although you do not belong to any church). Your wife has fried them in a little oil, the only fat you have received since last November. With three slices of bread it makes a grand supper.

Let us hope that on your way to the farmer's you will find someone who is interested in your suit. Better not! You will have to sell a small stock of food soon you will not be able to carry on, and your parents (if they are still alive) will die of hunger. These hunger expeditions are frequent. Frequently one sees people collapsing by the wayside.

Six o'clock! Now comes the highlight of the day. Haven't the paper come yet? But you have long since ceased to read newspapers. Far better get your news from the underground sources, and you don't need the newspaper for the food announcements. Someone will tell you the number of those miserable bread and potato vouchers. Therefore the stencilled paper called Het Parool, Je Maintinendrai, Nederland zal niet verhongeren (Netherlands shall rise again) Trouw or Het Orange Bulletin (The Orange Bulletin) is the newspaper.

The paper tells you why Holland's food situation is desperate. The Huns have blighted the country like a swarm of locusts. Then they used hunger as a means of breaking our morale. In order to get rid of loads of potatoes to rot, rather than divide them among the population. But the paper says: "Carry on!" It is read out during mealtimes in the family circle... The Americans are advancing in the Far East. Berlin bombed again. The resistance movement has blown up a recruiting office which organized deportations to Germany. Money is going for the Huns and the strong. "It's going well, boys. Carry on!"

But the number of those who can no longer believe in liberation is growing. Yes, "it's going well," but when are we going to be liberated? When we are all dead and buried..." Buried!!" There are no more coffins and no funeral carriages. We say, "May God grant that we will be liberated before we die of starvation or before we are so far gone that we are beyond aid." The German has not brought hunger. But hunger is stronger than strength of mind. The Huns have sold a half million Dutchmen in the "hunger provinces" remain at their posts. The enemy cannot break us, but tonight hunger will keep us awake again.

QUEEN WILHELMINA OF THE NETHERLANDS received a rousing welcome when she returned on a visit to liberated Holland, on March 19, following a period of nearly five years. In shot (above) she was cheered everywhere, children waving flags, as she walked among them chatting informally. Life in the "hunger provinces" is described in this page. Dutch. BNRNA Official.
Canadians On the Way to the V-Bomb Bases

TORN UP BY THE "TRACK RIPPER," NAZI SABOTAGE WEAPON, the railway lines near Emmerich (1), 30 miles south-east of Arnhem and captured on March 22, 1945, were rendered useless by the enemy retreating before the Canadian 1st Army on the northern shoulder of the lower Rhine sector. British and Canadian armour passing through shattered Emmerich (2). Netherlands children (3) cheered Canadian troops and armour hurrying through the Hommel area (4) to the V-bomb bases at Zutphen (sized April 8).
Feats of the Royal Regiment of Artillery

The non-contrary motto of the Royal Artillery—"Unique"—means "everywhere." And that is where individual R.A. regiments are expected to be! It has no fixed composition in the field, and under its command may be formations from other regiments. Something of the Royal Regiment's great story in this war is told by MARK PRYSTIEL.

Western Front barrages are now synchronized by the Greenwich time signal pips, sent out on certain radio services every hour of the day and night so that gunners may correctly set their battery watches. This has been done ever since D-Day (June 6, 1944), at the special request of Field-Marshal Montgomery—and the precision is worthy of the heroes of the Royal Regiment of Artillery. Whenever the battle moults to a fresh phase of fury, as in the 1,000-gun barrage that heralded the Allied break across the River Roer (see illus. page 71), the gunners live and sweat through hours of dangerous glory. How comes it, then, that the activities of the Royal Artillery are still largely anonymous?

The numbers by which they are identified have a less personal touch than the historic names and county associations borne by infantry regiments. The 94th, 112th and 179th Field Regiments, all of them West Country units, were among the first to go into action on German soil, and an Anti-Tank Battery had the honor of providing the first units to cross the Rhine. The 181st Field Regiment, too, has collected no less than four Imperial Crosses, six Military Crosses, four D.M.C. Medals, a D.S.O. and four C-in-C's certificates for gallantry all within three months, a notable record of valor.

In contrast, the Netherlands, artillery and naval personnel have worked together with land artillery mounted on landing craft. It has been the Navy's job to keep the shipping ready to go to fire: the gunners the guns and the do the rest. This technique has been successfully used in covering landing forces before the establishment of shore artillery posts was practicable, and perhaps results were best exemplified in a recent battle on the Dutch coast when infantry faced a German attack at brigade strength for 15 hours without yielding an inch of ground. The seaward gunners brought fire to bear on minute-by-minute objectives as soon as they were signalled by their observation officers. And the gunners saved the day, an infantry officer afterwards commented. "Not a doubt of it!"

A Gun, a Scottish regiment had scarcely taken a certain canal after hard fighting when they found the R.A. units coming forward for further action. The gunners were admittedly surprised to see infantrymen manning their posts in trenches, and the infantry sergeant gazed back in amazement at them. "You guns here already!" he exclaimed. "That's fine! But we didn't think guns could cross that devil's ditch for hours!"

On another occasion, a Gun Position Officer's transport went forward in advance to establish a new position and gave a surprise to the Americans. "We thought you were Recce," they said "Jerry's only just gone. You don't waste any time, do you?"

Behind such tributes there lies the training that has created efficiency. The 181st Field Regiment, for example, was built around a converted infantry battalion and the men come from every walk of life. Today each man is an expert at his particular job, whether gunner, signalling, wireless operating, driving, line-laying or acting, but each individual could do another man's job if necessary. All have become cogs in the great machine behind the shells, and their periods of inactivity have been all too few in the chase from Normandy into the Reich itself.

There is a Survey Regiment of the Royal Artillery which landed in Sicily and for nineteen months has been-dragging slowly up Italy. Names like Ottowa, Cantano, Florence and the Gothic Line recall a but a few of the battles in which it has played a part. Thiers is the task of locating and observing enemy batteries. One way to do it is to sit out in forward observation posts, often under enemy fire, and wait for a gun.

When it is observed a geometrical bearing is taken and sent back to H.Q. (see illus. pages 205, 210). There the information is collated with "gen" from other posts. In time, when the locations have been checked, the gunner receives position and the enemy point is bombarded out of existence. Alternatively, in bad visibility, sound-ranging is worked out in accordance, a message system of microphones and wires on the ground.

The courage of the observation officers as they feel out the enemy positions, the skill of the signallers and line-layers, thus all form part of the successful work of the R.A. tanks moving forward, or enemy fire may tear the gun crews loose from their sheds and these have to be laid and relied. In Italy, survey parties and lavers have sometimes been lost in fifteen-foot snowdrifts, microphones have been removed by Nazi patrols, and sometimes it has been impossible to move equipment by truck or carrier. Then the drivers have to be four-hundredweight of equipment by blankets!

Just Ahead of the Foot-sloggers

A barrage is often the outcome of weeks of watching and planning, directed against enemy defences in depth. One artillery group has expended 5,000 shells in a day to this end. In other units, meeting normal demands for fire in battle, guns may fire more than 1,000 rounds in a day and this is "not somewhere near but on the target."

When a barrage supports an infantry attack, the line for opening fire may be just ahead of the foot-sloggers and shells must land in the right place. If they did not, they would fall among the infantry: too far, their effect would be wasted. Plotting the targets by the "acks" and laying the guns by the炮火 controls for a gunners per emplacement.

Add to this 100 per cent courage. For the enemy is similarly spotting and range-finding our own guns all the time. When Lance-Bombardier Jimmy McGuire received the M.M. it was because his section of a line had been cut no less than 70 times by enemy shellfire and he had kept the cable route manned. In another instance, a gun crew found the camouflage net of their gun ablaze; the rifle spread quickly over the whole gun pit—and they leap in and out of the flames to throw the ammunition clear.

A nother group on a 9.2-in. gun were knocked out by fragments of a heavy calibre shell. Stiff they attempted to continue the action, until another enemy shell scored a direct hit on the emplacement and put the gun completely out of action. When the guns were moved, a severe shell had to be run to an information point nearly 400 yards away on the other side of the man's field, which was being heavily shelled. The Number One on the gun took the message and brought up aid for the wounded.

Perhaps the gunner's saga can best be understood by the story of a 25-pounder group, now in North-West Europe. Veterans of the Battle of Britain, they were once exclusively ack-ack. Then their 37-in. guns were tested as field artillery. The experiment was brilliantly successful. The weapon is anti-everything Nazi, whether in the sky, on the ground or in water, for the men who serve the 3.7s have been trained in the field role and shoot in fire tasks previously given mainly to 25-pounders or to 9.2s which had joined the B.L.A. It has fired 100,000 rounds as field targets, tank and troop concentrations.
Over the Rhine With Monty’s Men

Opening of the final round of the war with Germany came on the night of March 23-24, 1945, when on a 25-mile front north of the Ruhr the Rhine was crossed by Field-Marshall Montgomery’s 21st Army Group. Among the first to cross were troops of the 1st and 51st Scottish Divisions. Jocks are seen (top right) leaving their assault craft. By the wrecked bridge at Wesel men of the Cheshire Regiment (bottom) landed from Buffaloes, which also carried supplies (top left) to the far side.
Royal Engineers Make Ferries and Bridges—

Twenty-one hours after men of the 15th Scottish Division had crossed Hitler's last great water barrier in the West, the first bridge had been completed and troops and supplies were pouring across. Well over 50,000 Sappers were engaged, and more than 2,000 ferry boats brought up the 5,000 tons of bridging and floating. A self-propelled gun of a Highland Division anti-tank regiment embarks on a raft (1), and guns and supplies go over (2). The first Bailey pontoon bridge across the Rhine (3).

For 21st Army Group's Dramatic Leap

Amphibious craft scurried to and fro as engineers assembled pontoons (4) for the bridging. For this vital work of construction the men were intensively trained on Yorkshire rivers. In the darkness of the night before the assault, bulldozers cut approach roads to the bridge and ferry sites. Then, as assault troops took the plunge in their Buffaloes the Sappers moved forward to the banks with all their weighty gear. Within a few hours two ferries and three bridges were operating.
Greatest air-swoop of the war carried glider and parachute troops of the famous British 6th Airborne Division beyond the Rhine in advance of the 2nd Army. Glider crew ready for action immediately after crash landing (top left). In Hamminkeln (top right), an anti-tank gun landed by glider is set up. 1st Commando Brigade crossed by boat at 10 p.m. on Mar. 21, ahead of any others, and by 2 a.m. had taken Wesel, where some of their 350 prisoners (bottom) crouch in a crater.
Evolution is to me of all subjects the most interesting. It combines the elements of a history, a fairy-tale with the wonders of science. That is true not only of the evolution which is a process of Nature; it applies equally to the development of machinery invented and constructed by man. Many, perhaps most, of these human inventions have been developed in response to the necessities of war. But the man who invented the machine or the engine also realized the potentialities of his contrivance, and he began to build and to develop it in order to destroy his enemies and to make his life easier.

There is no more fascinating story of ingenuity in the overcoming of difficulties than that of the great new short range battleship craft for the use of troops invading a country from the sea or across a wide river like the Rhine. Such craft are no new thing. Napoleon had a fleet of them at Boulogne when he thought of invading Britain. But if he could now see the difference between his flimsy-bottomed boats and best fighters, the Alligators, and other types of amphibious war vessels which are building today, he would gasp with astonishment.

Still more amazing would be the fact that the present was accomplished in a space of less than five years. Landing craft did not have a chance to develop at a rate one would have associated with the placing of a battleship. But, for the true development of landing craft, three men are primarily responsible: Mr. Gordon Holman in his book on the subject, "Landing Craft," published by Ronald Press and "Shogun, 76, 60-64." If anyone remembers landing craft in the twenty years' gap between 1918 and 1938 it was probably with a smile at the very idea of their freakishness.

Not till 1939, a month before this was started, did the first of a new kind of landing craft have its trials on the Clyde. These were built just in time to be employed for a purpose of which their designers and constructors were never sure. These early craft were not to be used on land against the British; the table at which they were designed. The war in the Channel and the whole question of the Channel Islands, which had seemed so clear to us, was a little cloudier when the Vichy French were given no chance at a fresh start.

The war in the Mediterranean is now in full swing, and the German Fifth Army is engaging in the Pyrenean War. There is no more effective weapon in this war than the small landing craft. As long as the Allies have a sea, they have a land war against a land war.

How the results of their labours would be put to use.

Silence was, of course, essential; and they were kept silent.

Although our supply of tanks was still uncertainly short in spite of the vast effort being put into their construction, some of the new craft were designed to carry tanks. This was done not as a new idea, but as a deliberate policy. The need of tanks was the first thing to come to mind when any question of a new type of landing craft was discussed. The need of tanks was the first thing to come to mind when any question of a new type of landing craft was discussed. The tanks were fitted in such a way that they could be taken out of the craft and put ashore.

The tank landing craft are about 200 feet in length and about 30 feet wide, with a displacement of about 1,700 tons. The two sterns of the craft are each available for tanks, and the three forward tanks can be loaded on to the beach with the help of a crane. The turret is equipped with a 3-in. gun for use in shore protection.

Nearly all the weight is aft, and this helps to trim the vessel for landing purposes. A large ramp set at an angle of around 10 degrees from the squared-off bow, and where the lower part of the ramp enters the water the craft draws no more than three feet. The whole of the flat bottom of the vessel slopes gently until in the stern she draws seven feet. The ramp in the bow is hinged at the bottom and can be lowered quickly by hand power-driven winches. When it is drawn it provides a rampway on to the beaches for the vehicles carried.

Two-thirds of the space of the craft is available for tanks, which are lashed to the metal decks to prevent them from moving while at anchor. The craft is powered by two 500 h.p. diesel engines. The running quarters of the crew are well off and can only be described as cramped.

The guns, consisting of two officers and ten petty officers and men, make the best of it. "Although they have to live very much more close to the top of one another than the gunners of a standard of naval discipline to be observed," and they turn out smartly when occasion calls for smartness.

As in all small ships, there is a fine comradeship added to, no doubt, in this case by the fact that almost invariably the men are "bunkies only" ratings, and the officers for their promotion after serving on the lower deck.

The first time the new types of landing craft were used for attack was at the end of 1941, when the Lofoten Islands, off Norway, were taken. They were well off, did all that was expected of them. So they did at Dieppe in August of the next year. This was the final testing for "Navy," and "Navy," and it proved a very hard test indeed. For night after night, the tanks came through with flying colours. All the tanks were put down on the beaches, though in places the fire from the shore batteries was only steady. When the time came to take off the troops who had been fighting on the beach, the top, the "naval crews displayed outstanding gallantry."

We learned a lot from that operation at Dieppe, which in itself was such an unhappy failure, but greatly towards later operations which were almost complete success. In Sicily, of course, the landing craft assisted in putting ashore within forty-eight hours of the first assault 80,000 men, 7,000 tank-carrying craft, 7,000,000 worth of which there appeared a new type "produced with amazing speed in American shipbuilding yards."

These were on a far bigger scale and they looked more like ships because they had broad bows, and were divided by the fact, two huge doors. When these opened, the tanks dropped down on to the beach. The craft was large enough to carry the small tankers.

The interior was like a vast hall or warehouse; nothing was allowed to interfere with the need for loading speed. Time went on, and at last D-Day arrived. All the craft needed were readied. All the men that required had been thoroughly trained. They were about to do, as the late Admiral Sir Berttram Ramsey put it, "...what Philip of Spain failed to do, what Napoleon tried and failed to do, and what Hitler never had the courage to try." They were about to take part in "the greatest amphibious operation in history." (another of Admiral Ramsey's stirring phrases). How well, how skilfully, how bravely they did it is another story.

Where all behaved so magnificently it may seem impossible to single out any deed of heroism. But it must be related one such deed because it was performed not in the heat of battle, when the blood is summed up and the sinews stiffened, but in conditions of a totally different colour.

Capt. G. E. Tandy, of the Royal Marines, second in command of the scout ship that covered the loss of the landing craft, is described as "the comrade of an assault landing craft which had to travel several miles before putting its lead of 32 soldiers ashore on the Normandy coast. The sea was running high; the steering-wheel was smashed. What could be done? Tandy knew. He slipped over the stern into the water, placed one foot on the rugged guard-rail and directly controlled the rudder with the other. For this foot was covered by a rim of wood round the stern of the boat and my centre of gravity was on the deck. In this way he faced a seven-mile journey to the French shore."

Nor was that all. When he landed his passengers, Tandy decided to take his craft back. It was now almost next best to being killed in action, and the thing that would have seemed crazy to the Hun if they had known about it; we set about making preparations for the day when we thought that all was done. When we were going to do this same day was in all minds.

The trouble was that the ships were full with what was considered to be in the way of which the young corporals, as ex sailors, entered in the remarkable manner related in this page. PAGE 787
Allied Military Control at Work in Wesel

AT LIPPESTADT, when the U.S. 9th and 1st Armies entered it on April 1, 1945, thus closing a ring of steel round the Ruhr, the local police had Red and the new Allied troops engaged in an orgy of looting. A few weeks later, villagers at Matern were huddled outside their sandhill shelter as Allied troops arrived on March 9.

A joint Allied military control took over in ruind Wesel (captured by British Commandos on March 24), appointing German civilians to enforce their instructions to remaining townsfolk. A sergeant of the Middlesex Regiment and a U.S. private stick up the Allied press notices that are exhibited at the headquarters of at least one German civilian. The British officer commanding at Wesel passed his instructions to German civilians to townpeople to represent them with the Allied military government.

Photo, British official; British News

Page 788
War Factories Wrenched from the Hun Intact

Prefabricated U-boats were among the hoard taken by the U.S. 1st Army at Rheinbrohl, east of the Rhine and north of Coblenz, during General Hodges' big push in late March, 1945; partly finished submarines were seen at the dock [1] at the famous shipyard. Prisoners were dispatched to coastal assembly yards. Among the prisoners released were Russian slave-workers, including women and girls, who celebrated their freedom with dancing [2].

Of special interest to these U.S. Army engineers [3] was the prefabricated section of a U-boat. Prefabricated U-boats came into production in quantity after V-E Day, when 1,000 Fortresses and Liberators of the U.S. 8th Air Force struck at Bremen, Hamburg and Wilhelmshaven in the greatest U.S. attack to date on naval installations in the West. On the Eastern front, a Soviet soldier guards another type of prefabricated submarine [4], captured near Berlin. (Photos, Associated Press, Piersall Press)
AT FRANKFORT-ON-MAIN, BIRTHPLACE OF GOETHE, Germany's greatest poet, youthful civilians crowded the streets (1) as men of General Patton's U.S. 3rd Army moved in on March 28, 1945. When General Patch's U.S. 7th Army took over in Mannheim the following day, refugees crept from a huge air-raid shelter, raising the white flag (2). At Heidelberg (3), ancient university town taken almost undamaged on March 30, captured Nazi snipers were marched away—out of the war.

PAGE 79.
A New Use for Germany's Famous Motor-Roads

ON THE BROAD FRANKFORT AUTOBAHN, bounds of Nazi prisoners marched westwards to captivity after the swift seizure of Giessen, important rail-and-road junction in the Lahn valley, by General Hodges' U.S. 1st Army on March 28, 1945. As the captives moved thickly along the grass-covered dividing line of this Frankfort motor-road, tanks and transport of the 6th Armoured Division of General Patton's U.S. 3rd Army rolled in a one-way stream towards Cassel, which they cleared on April 4.
Red Army Advance Freed British Prisoners

RESCUED FROM NAZI P.O.W. CAMPS overrun by the Russians in their rapid sweep westwards, and magnificently saved for by the Soviet Government, over 1,000 Allied Servicemen arrived by a northern British port on March 19, 1945; travelling by way of the Middle East, a smiling group in full cap (1) chatted with a Soviet officer before embarking at Odessa. Those (2), liberated at Posen, trudged through the snows to a repatriation centre. Soviet transport (3) bore the prisoners home; (4) Mr. Churchill met the last (3); four of them sported a Nazi flag and armistice as trophies (5). The repatriates included officers and men of the British Army, the Royal Navy, the R.A.F., R.C.A.F., the Canadian Army and the Royal Norwegian Army.

PAGE 792  Photo, National Press, New York Times
I WAS THERE!  
Eye Witness  
Stories of the War

From Above the Rhine I Saw the Sky-Men Pounce

Field-Marshal Montgomery in March 1945, in a personal message to his troops, included this memorable phrase, "21st Army Group will now cross the Rhine." Here James Welland, The Sunday Express Correspondent, tells what he saw from an observation plane monitoring river traffic on March 24. See also illus. pages 777, 778 and 783-786.

It is 11 o'clock, Saturday morning, and as far as the eye can see to the east, from 1,300 feet above the Rhine, Germany is flaming and smoking. What is now going on in the skies around me, on the ground and in water, is like a futurist painting of Armageddon. For the Germans on the east bank of the Rhine it is Armageddon.

This is D-Day concentrated. Filling the sky, transport planes, two-engine American Dakotas, four-engine British Halifaxes, are streaming across the sky in two columns, I saw the first wave of this airborne armada just go in. From each plane there was a series of tiny explosive puffs which blossomed out into parachutes. Suddenly, a thousand men were swinging to the ground. German flak reacted strongly to the first wave. Despite tremendous artillery and fighter-bomber barrage some flak batteries survived. From them, dirty black puffs are blotting the sky. From others, red tracers are coming up.

I see one Dakota plunge suddenly to earth. Two more minutes later one of them breaks into a startled blaze. The planes get across the Rhine. The crew bale out. Still the planes come in. Now the second wave is approaching. I look through the glass roof of the observation plane, and see giant low-planes pulling, on long nylon ropes, two gliders apiece. These are smaller American Waco gliders, which fly either one behind the other or in line abreast.

Next come the big British Horsas, heaving out of the British Halifaxes. They come by hundreds, suddenly break loose from the low-planes and start circling and diving to the east. Mercifully the German flak seems almost to have stopped now, and we speculate whether the flak gun crews have panicked under the monstrous spectacle of this air armada and abandoned their positions.

As we sail slowly along the Rhine between Xanten and Wesel and cross to the other side to land I see the flaming German town of Blischt. I can see that resistance has collapsed for miles inland. My pilot is looking for enemy flak and artillery positions. We can find none, and during our hour in the air, the only sights we saw are shells landing on the west bank. It fell between two Alligators lined up along the white road waiting their turn to go down into the river.

At the river banks the scene is almost as peaceful as a Saturday afternoon on the Thames. The countryside is lush and flat on both sides of the Rhine. Our ferries are scuttling back and forth like water beetles with nothing to nag them. I can see men standing in boats waving to us.

There are vehicles, British and American, stacked on both banks. Crews stand around leisurely. Some are lying on their backs in the beautiful sunshine, some are eating. Everything, as a field commander said, is "going like a house afire.

I see our pontoon bridges already reaching out across the river. The Alligators need not wait for them, and waddle down through the mud, plunging into the water and start swimming across. Trucks on ferries are starting across. Already hundreds of vehicles with coloured recognition panels atop them are moving eastward across the Rhine.

Every German town and village inland is buried under mushroom-like clouds of smoke. Our artillery has killed them. Rubble is so deep our traffic is going around over fields marked out with white tape. Along one road, walking west, comes a line of men in blue-grey uniforms. They are 200 German prisoners with one Tommy escorting them to the river.

We fly south to Wesel; Wesel flattened and looking from the air like the embers of a bonfire. Our vehicles are already moving in. Last night the R.A.F. gave its most perfect demonstration of night precision bombing. Wesel is small, compact. They say every bomb went straight into the target. If there are Germans in Wesel they most still be digging their way out of the rubble.

To the north, somewhere, another wave of gliders were going down. Fields for miles were dotted now with white, red and orange parachutes. Gliders with their infantrymen and supplies have to make a steep, dangerous descent into fields, and down they go, whirling like big birds all over the sky.

I see them dripping to a halt among fences and trees, and men leaping out and running towards ditches. But the fantastic thing about it all is the absence of enemy opposition.

Slaves of the Reich on the Westward Trek

Tragic is the march of the freed peoples who had been pressed into Hitler's hated service; tragic, too, will be the homecoming for thousands of them.

Pathetic is their gratitude to their liberators. Colin Wells, News Chronicle

War Correspondent with the British 2nd Army, sent this dispatch on April 2, 1945, depicting scenes on the roads of Western Germany.

We have burst the walls of the prison land, and through the gaps the slaves are streaming westwards in scores of thousands, amazed by the light of freedom. They line both sides of every road, trudging on through dust or damp, continually stepping aside out of the way of our outrushing columns. Some, perhaps, some push makeshift handcarts laden with the bundles of four or five500 pounds of the road. But very few have any belongings at all beyond their ragged civilian suits or patchwork uniforms.

These uniforms are as diverse as the poor wretches who wear them. Some are the uniforms of Allied armies to which the wearers belonged before they were captured and drafted into German labour gangs. Others are the garb of the Todt organization and other similar slave groups. Inevitably the eye becomes accustomed; after a while the trudging columns become part of the unnoticed landscape.

And then suddenly one is aware of a face, glimpsed in passing, and the mind photographs the expression of the eye, the cruel sculpture wrought on the grey flesh by years of suffering. Suddenly one realizes what is going on. These are men and women recalled to life.

Slowly, painfully, they are making their way homeward. The home they left years

ago may no longer exist. Their families and friends may be dead. But they have got to go on living. They are weak, weary, and ill, some of them crippled.

Only the irresistible call of home can keep them going—that and the unbelievable experience of freedom. For they are free. Free! They walk the roads, and the very dust they shuffle through is blessed to walk upon. Free! They eat their meagre meals disputing the joy in the new, crisp, taste sweet. They all move westward, though many come from the east and bear on the sleeve or breast a letter P. for Polish, on the other. Only a few show they came from somewhere in Germany's eastern European reservoir of helots.

Many are Russians, and these raise a proud smile as they point to themselves and shout to you, "We Ruskis," and if you stop and tell them the latest news of the Red Army the smile becomes a broad grin and they pace with longer strides and squarer shoulders.

They all move westward—easterners along with French, Belgians and Dutch, Czechs and Yugo-Slavs, along with Danes and Norwegians, because westward they will find Allied organizations ready to deal with them and send them home when possible.

Already these organizations are penetrating well into the battle zones, but cannot keep pace with the Allied spearhead. So the freed slaves march west to meet them. In the last few days prisoners have begun to swell the ranks of the marching men. Several Battles have been overrun, and many might not have waited for official transport. They must start homeways instantly.

I have met scores of French and Belgian soldiers walking west, shaken their hands, given them cigarettes, talked with them. It is not the language, though they seem to understand it. They have even been able to muster a little gaiety and wear bright scarves stuck up somewhere along the road. One even marched solemnly in the silk top hat of some fleeing German burghehrs.

There is immense satisfaction in rolling into Germany with the conquering armies. But there is deeper satisfaction in realizing that even in Germany these are still armies of liberation. For, however pathetic these columns of pilgrims are, however tragic their past, however difficult their future, this is an hour of wonder for them—the hour when they can say, as they do say over and over among themselves, in all their diverse tongues: "We are free!"

---

I Saw Hitler's Great Arsenal Cold and Dead

The 15 square miles of the Thysen steel works, where Germany's war weapons had been forged, have taken the final knock-out. Writing from Duisburg on March 7, 1945, Daily Mail Special Correspondent Harold Monteith, with the U.S. 30th Army, records his visit to this smashed-up "arsenal of hate."

And a thousand German workers today came out of their holes in the ground—tired and cowering, shivering and hungry—in one of the most significant mass surrenders of the war. They had been on strike since January 22—date of the last R.A.F. raid—when at least 5,000 of their fellow-workers perished at their benches.

The Nazis could do since then could get these people to evacuate the ruins of the once-thrilling works and continue elsewhere. The war for them ended on the night of January 22. Not a wheel has turned in the giant blast furnaces since.

They could not have turned even if the workers had been in the mood. For the plant's 15 square miles is a mass of rusty, twisted ruins; and in the giant blast furnaces that for 12 years have been forging Hitler's war weapons there are now only stone-cold coals. The great steel chimneys still stand, giant and smokeless. Wandering through the ruins of the Thysen plant today was like walking over the graves of millions of men, for it was the Thysen brothers who dazzled Hitler with their hearth's voices with excitement.

Some of them somehow have managed to make themselves little cockades in their national colours, wherewith to adorn their shabby Army caps. Others have even been able to muster a little gaiety and wear bright scarves stuck up somewhere along the road. One even marched solemnly in the silk top hat of some fleeing German burghehrs.

There is immense satisfaction in rolling into Germany with the conquering armies. But there is deeper satisfaction in realizing that even in Germany these are still armies of liberation. For, however pathetic these columns of pilgrims are, however tragic their past, however difficult their future, this is an hour of wonder for them—the hour when they can say, as they do say over and over among themselves, in all their diverse tongues: "We are free!"

---

SLAVES RELEASED by the swiftly advancing 43d, 71st Army, these French and Russian soldiers, once prisoners in German hands, are paraded in rear of the Allied lines as narrated here.

---

A huge flag droops over the administration building of the once mighty Thyssen steel works here, a fitting sign that Hitler's game is up.

For the Nazis' plans of world conquest were dashed in the thousands of blast furnaces within sight of where I am writing this.

There were 15,000 German workers in 30 blast furnaces. The weapons of war were assembled here and were too valuable to be destroyed. Hitler's war machine was smashed here. The workers walked out. They organized themselves into the Union of German Workers. The workers of the steel works were not the only people who were organized into unions and became very adept at sabotage.

The Thyssen plant today was like walking over the graves of millions of men, for it was the Thysen brothers who dazzled Hitler with their hearth's voices with excitement.

Some of them somehow have managed to make themselves little cockades in their national colours, wherewith to adorn their shabby Army caps. Others have even been able to muster a little gaiety and wear bright scarves stuck up somewhere along the road. One even marched solemnly in the silk top hat of some fleeing German burghehrs.

There is immense satisfaction in rolling into Germany with the conquering armies. But there is deeper satisfaction in realizing that even in Germany these are still armies of liberation. For, however pathetic these columns of pilgrims are, however tragic their past, however difficult their future, this is an hour of wonder for them—the hour when they can say, as they do say over and over among themselves, in all their diverse tongues: "We are free!"

---

Battle of Rheine Town and Its Aftermath

Two days before Montgomery's Rhine crossing, airfields around Rheine from which German jet-propelled and fighter squadrons operated had been heavily attacked by 1,500 Fortresses and Liberators. The town itself was entered by the 11th Armoured Division on April 2, 1945, and Daily Mail Special Correspondent Alexander Clifford tells of the battle.

I watched it from the farm building where I was eating my lunch, half a mile away. It happened on some high ground just beyond the Dortmund Canal. The Somerset Light Infantry, who had got across the canal some time before. The last bridge had been blown up as the new bridge had been swiftly built. Then they drove up on the road in the usual way.

And suddenly they found themselves faced with a battle. The Germans had cleared out an N.C.O.'s training school at Hanover, formed the pupils into a battalion, and marched them on foot to the canal. They were only very lightly armed, but they occupied a wood and blocked the defiles through the high ground.

They were good soldiers. They even launched counter-attacks, which in almost unheard of uselessness as they lay to the south. With a vengeance they put to the north.

It went on from three sides. The Montgomery had gone round behind the ridge and the Herefords had attacked from in front of it. On the canal side tank stands in the fields and woods.

In about ten minutes of battle one saw what was happening to this country. Two farmlands and a wood were abolished and the German battalion broken into fragments.

Mortar shells began drooping into the wood, bursting about the treetops and
**Flash-backs**

**1940**

- **April 9.** Denmark and Norway invaded by German armies.
- **April 10.** First battle of Nordv. "destroyer Hardy" sunk.

**1941**

- **March 28.** Battle of Cape Matapan; Italian fleet routed.
- **April 5.** Yugoslav and Greek forces invaded.

**1942**

- **March 27-28.** Combined Operations raid on port of St. Nazaire.
- **April 9.** American resistance ended on Bataan, Philippines.
- **April 10.** Chinese occupied Tunisian port of Sfax.
- **April 11.** Russian troops invaded Finland. Germans occupied Riga and Rovno.

**1943**

- **March 28.** Marath, Tuscum and Macassar captured by British forces.
- **April 10.** British troops entered Tunisi.
- **April 11.** German troops captured Cassino and reached the Isola river.

**1944**

- **March 31.** British forces crossed River Stura into Romania.
- **April 10.** Black Sea port of Odessa recaptured by Russians.

The sea battle was a great disappointment to the civilians and discussing psychological theories about them. They had been away a long and tough road and found themselves with nothing but a white flag to show they never ever had our approach of hope. And you stop to get eggs and you know that you are getting genuine spontaneous reaction from the farm people.

This afternoon a laughing buxom girl bought us the eggs, wished us a happy Easter, and asked, "When are tanks coming?"

We refused to discuss military details and she was frankly disappointed.

She liked soldiers and she wanted to see ours. Her little eyes shone in anticipation as we left.

What are you to make of it? One really gets the impression that they want to be friendly. And it is a pleasant feeling when you see their towns. Take Rheine, which is the Second Army's biggest to date. It isn't flat entirely, but empty and uninhabitable.

Once again the stout old church seems to have been miraculously spared. It is un- candidly quiet save for the spasmodic crack of the sniper's rifle. There is really nothing to do but sit and watch the empty streets and see what you can from either side.

You find that everything has obviously been left at a moment's notice—half-cooked food on cold stoves, cash still in the cash registers, wine on the cafe tables. All of it half-wrecked, of course, but all recognizable there. You find a clothing shop burnt wide open and you wonder at the astonishing display of garments.

I suppose none of that was much good, but I sold enough artificial silk stockings to make a good profit on any comparable thing you might get in English town green with envy. Just now and again you become conscious of the great number of personal tragedy that lies around. A half-

finished letter on a desk, or an umbrella left to dry before a now cold stove, makes you realize that some here have probably deserted their homes. If you don't believe the Germans are being punished, you should walk through Rheine's wrecked town that is becoming sickeningly familiar.

It was bombed because it was the centre of a ring of airfields. It was shelled because it lies on the Ems and some old German units attempted to escape. It was entered, and it went through the harsh scrutiny of bombing that is known as being "cleared." That is to say, it was made safe to our troops. So you thread its nearest streets, glass and woodwork falling from your wheels and empty windows staring blankly at you from either side.
STREAMING TO CAPTIVITY IN THEIR THOUSANDS, relics of the Wehrmacht in the eastern Rhineland passed in procession (1) to the cages, following the U.S. 3rd Army's spectacular surge across the river, launched on March 21. (2) In a message to his troops on March 20, Gen. Patton declared that in less than two months they had captured 40,000 enemy soldiers and killed or wounded 8,000. (3) Among the 8,000 Germans taken by Patton's troops in the four-triangle area were these (3). At Weid, on March 17, the 3rd British Commando Brigade captured the German commander, Lieut.-Col. Reit (5).
THE WAR IN THE AIR

by Capt. Norman Macmillan, M.C., A.F.C.

For seven days before the 21st Army Group crossed of the Lower Rhine, massed formations of aircraft of the 2nd T.A.F., the U.S.A. 9th A.F., Bomber Command and the U.S.A. 8th A.F. raced tanks, rockets, cannon-shells and bullets upon tactical targets east of the river barrier, attacking guns, troop concentrations, and bridges as far forward as the river Weser (at Bremen, on March 23, with 280 bombs). The earlier cloud-covered skies had changed.

The co-ordination of all British and American air forces engaged in the operation (whether based on the Western Coast of the U.K.) was controlled by Air Marshal Sir Arthur Harris, the commander of 2nd T.A.F. Through their combined effort all rail communication to, the chosen combat area was smashed on the enemy side, and the battlefield isolated. British heavy bombers struck the strategic railway centres of Münster, Hanover and Osnabrück; sub- sequently, on March 4, 5 and 8, Lancaster and enemy troop concentrations 60 miles north- east of Cassel.

Between 9 p.m., on March 22 and 3 a.m., on March 23, 5,500 aircraft of the 1st Army Group crossed the Rhine in Buffalos and naval mechanised and vehicle personnel landing craft. After daylight on the 24th the greatest air force ever seen was placed into position ahead of the surface forces in areas east of Rees and Wesel. More than 40,000 troops invaded Germany from the air that day. The glider train was 500 miles long, and included 5,000 and 6,000 aircraft of all types flew in one operation: tugs, gliders, bombers, fighters. Curtis C-46 Commandos able to carry 36 paratroopers were used for the first time. One airborne formation carried an anti-aircraft unit. In one convoy some British gliders carried two jeeps, 6-pdr. guns, other artillery, automatic weapons, blood plasma. Liberators following the gliders dropped from a few hundred feet 500 tons, including 4,400 gunnies and bottles containing food, fighting rations, and medical supplies.

Lunch-Time Attack on Berlin by Soviet Heavy Bombers

Fifty per cent of the Glider Pilot Regiment pilots who landed the troops east of the Rhine were volunteers from the R.A.F. Twenty-one more landed after landing. No. 1 Group, 1st Allied Airborne Army, commanded by Air Vice-Marshal J. R. Scarlett-Stonard, was responsible for the British airborne operation. (See blu p. 776.)

From Italy heavy bombers of the U.S. A. 15th A.F. flew to bomb Berlin for the first time on March 24. Lightning fighter escorting them at the Italian end of their double journey; Mustangs met them over the target area and protected them there. Two days later Berlin was attacked at lunch- time by Soviet bombers. That same day the parachute and glider, borne forces and the ground forces east of the Rhine had linked up. Forces from the three main bridge-heads across the Rhine at the Wesel, Remagen and Maunz crossings adjoined the German line, and resistance began to crumble. By March 28 the forward moves were so rapid that pilots of the tactical air forces reported the enemy fleeing eastward, and the Allied bomb-heine (demolition) bomb, which bombs must not be dropped because of the risk of hitting Allied troops, appeared at short intervals throughout the day. Some attack sorties had to be recalled for re-fuelling before they could drop their bomb load of 46 cwt. On April 3, 780 Fortresses, with 650 Mustangs in escort, bombed ship-building yards at Kiel, and a smaller force of Liberators bombed Hamburg.

In the Far East, after a preliminary bombardment by British and American carrierborne aircraft, U.S. forces landed on Okinawa in the Ryukyu Islands, 370 miles south-west of Japan, on April 1. This American invasion was a continuation of Pacific strategy in which the larger islands—in this case Formosa and Kyushu—are bypassed and a smaller island seized to serve as a fixed aircraft carrier. British support to the American landing was given in opening atta- cks on March 26 and 27 against the Sakishima Islands by Averager bombers, rocket-firing Fireflies, and Hellcat and Corsair fighters. The carriers were led by the Illustrious. The objectives were aerodromes, radio and harbour installations, administrative buildings and vessels.

Okinawa Island is 50 miles long and averages over 10 miles across. Little opposes on the surface, but two airfields were quickly captured. But on April 6, Japanese

As the armies pushed on to capture town after town—Speyer on March 23, Darmstadt on March 25, Frankfort-on-Main on March 26, Cassel on April 3, Osnabrück and Mengelo on April 4 and Almele on April 5—and swing wide to bypass the Rhine, the bombers maintained their strategic war; on Good Friday, March 30, the U.S.A. 8th A.F. sent its biggest force of 1,400 bombers escorted by 900 fighters to bomb the U-boat yards and other targets at Bremen, Hamburg and Wilhelmshaven. The cruiser Köln and other ships were sunk.

The day was indeed a good Friday for England. V-weapon bombardment ceased, and up to the time of writing has not been resumed. This is partly due to the bomber's cutting of the railways, but more to the Germans pulling out of Holland through the gap between Arnhem and the Zuider Zee, under the increasing pressure of the Canadian 1st Army and the tactical aircraft working with it. (This confirms the forecast in my first special article; see page 707; written after visiting the Western Front.) That day 2nd T.A.F. was ordered to hold fire because of the swift advance of the bomb-line ahead of Montgomery's now fast-moving "break- out" forces: British tanks entered Munster. But this gave the aircraft the more opportu- nity to bomb the German columns evacuat- ing Western Holland in the biggest air- attack since Falaise; from the evening of March 31 the escape roads were jammed with German traffic.

Allied aircraft moved forward across the Rhine to operate from captured German airfields, and to maintain with greater ease their close air support for the surface forces. Strategic tonnage in March broke all records. Bomber Command dropped 67,500 tons and the U.S.A. 8th A.F. 65,625 (British) tons—all on Germany; the U.S.A. bombers flew 39,500 sorties, carrying an average bomb resistance stiffened, and a great air/sea action followed a Japanese bomber attack on the U.S.S. fleet; 417 Jap aircraft were shot down, 39 by the British.

According sources state that in the Far East are the British aircraft carriers Illustrious, Victorious, Formidable, Implacable, Indefatigable, Furious and Eagle: this force should be able to place about 400-450 aircraft into the air, but it is likely that some of these carriers are in the Indian Ocean.

A small force of Super Fortresses bombers attacked Nagoya on March 30. On April 6, Super Fortresses bombing Tokyo and Nagoya (about 300 in the force) were escorted for the first time by fighters of the U.S.A. 7th A.F. On that day Liberators based in the Philippines bombed Hong Kong targets for the third consecutive day. On March 30 P11 H. C. Graham flew a Canadian-built Mosquito 2,184 miles from Newfoundland to Scotland in 5 hrs. 38 mins. at a speed of 61 miles a minute. On March 31, 1945, the Joint Commonwealth Air Training Plan for training air-crews ended.

PREPARING FOR THE WESSEL LANDINGS. March 24, 1945. British parachute troops became proficient in rape-decimation as part of the instructional course laid down at a training school in England. Before his first descent a fascier goes through a programme in which over 25 mediums of jumping and landing are used. See also story in page 92, Vol. 7.
From Home to Rome With Our Roving Camera

PREFabRICATED HOUSE (left), one of 30,000 being prepared for shipment from the U.S.A. to ease the plight of bombed-out Londoners, was an exhibition at 40 Euston Road last week. Mr. Duncan Sandys, Min-
ister of Works, declared that London house repairs were near-
ing the 119,000 target.

ACTING AS POLICEMEN with the Inter-Allied Control Com-
misson in Germany after the war, British police officers will wear a uniform (below) of dark blue with silver buttons, resembling Civil Defence battledress.

IN A ROME NAAFI (above), a British sergeant records a message for home. Thousands of families in Britain are to hear the voices of their men recorded on gramophone records in Italy and the Middle East.

TEN-TON BOMBS of the R.A.F. (below) rifle to the filling-centre on a specially designed ferry with 90 h.p. Diesel engine. These gigantic incendiaries soften up the Rats for the big advance. They are flown to their targets in Lancaster bombers, which themselves weigh just over 100 tons. See also illus. in page 740.

FOOD FOR LIBERATED HOLLAND stored in an Allied warehouse, including sacks of sugar and flour, ready for distribution. Desperate plight of the in-
habitants of the occupied region of the Netherlands is described in page 786.
RECENTLY, with the space of a few days, B.B.C. listeners lost three of their favourite entertainers, among them ‘brother Eugene’—the intangible host of the ‘Latin Notes’. Which leads me to the obvious reflection that all forms of contemporary fame—none is so immediate and yet so transient as that of the other. Who, for instance, remembers the early Savoy Hill artists—John Henry, Uncle Caracass, the Pianist with the Soft Voice? A. J. Alan and the rest—all of whom had their little half-hours? The news that plans are already under way to re-establish Britain’s pre-war lead in television sets me wondering whether the new Navy—not least the resourceful Surgeon-Commander in fast gloomy scene where he “de-hypnotizes” shell-shocked casualties and gets them staggering back to their action stations. It is a scene of Victor Hugo, and executed in less than a twelfth of the space Hugo would have taken.

From his charming little estate in Herefordshire, my old friend Ralph Sabatini, the novelist, in a recent letter, tells me of an unusual press-cutting he has just received. From the Birkenhead News, it announced that a British soldier in France recently fished up from the bed of a river a book belonging to the Birkenhead Public Library, and which turned out to be a copy of Sabatini’s novel The Mission. “I don’t know,” comments my reliable friend, “whether the impugnation is the wide diffusion of my stories or that the proper place for them is at the bottom of the Mersey. Sabatini is himself a keen salmon-fisher and went about a mile of—of the banks of which stands his home, Clock Mill. Somehow I feel that his sympathies were all with his fellow-fisherman who hooked a stily and missed a fish, though, books being at a premium and a Sabatini on that day always making good reading, perhaps the soldier felt he hadn’t done so badly. Had it been the Sabatini which got away, money would have believed him—not even a fellow-angler!”

The birthplace of Beethoven at Bonn had the narrowest possible escape during the Allied bombardment which led to the town’s capture on March 8, 1945, the next house being placed only twenty yards away by one of our shells. Another split second, and what hypothesis could we have gone up from the people who befouled, decimated, and finally consigned to the fire of Leo Tolstoy at Yasnaya Polyana, crying: “We will burn everything connected with the name of Tolstoy and the particular pride of the Tolstoy shrine was that it had been sedulously kept just as it looked in the writer’s lifetime. The indefatigable Russians have restored it to that condition as nearly as possible. But it can never be the same again: the spell is broken. It is all too reminiscent of the American showman who used to exhibit the axe with which George Washington cut down his father’s cherry tree. Since Washington’s day the axe had had two new blades and three new handles, but it was still the same axe. In Concord, Massachusetts, you are shown Emerson’s desk, and this too by order as it was on the day he died, open book, pencil and old pipe. I saw the axe, which was a block calendar for 1822 torn off to the actual date, April 27. Most impressive—until you found you were not the only one to stand over the desk that day, in the Concord museum! The entire contents of the room were transferred bodily from Emerson’s house in the same road.

Outside St. Paul’s Cathedral the other day a friend of mine was stopped by three young Scots Canadians in uniform, inadvisedly “rubbernecking” among the City ruins. “Pardon me, sir,” one of them, asking a thumb towards Wandsworth’s masterpiece, “but is this the Museum?” Taken back, my friend realises he had been insulted. Didn’t they know the building? Hadn’t they seen pictures of it? But they all shook their heads, and one of them, as if he was on his last legs, said, “I can’t get away.” So he went, and then, thanking him, moved away. It seems incredible—but there it is.

The War Illustrated—VOLUME EIGHT
Special Binding Offer to Subscribers

With the number THE WAR ILLUSTRATED contains 182 pages, including twelve coloured plates, and 115 illustrations bound in the following prices.

STANDARD CASE—4/- in dark red rigid binding case and 4/- for binding and return carriage.

DELUXE STYLE—4/- each volume for four years, no additional payment required for binding and return carriage. The above prices also apply for the issues of Reprints of THE WAR ILLUSTRATED.

If you wish to order the binding, and your local post office (which must be in good condition) by Parcel Post to—THE WAR ILLUSTRATED, BIRKENHEAD DEANERY, LIVERPOOL, L.E.C. (ENCLOSING YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS AND U.S.S.R. (U.S.S.R.)) Receivers of the above, in any country, presenting the actual parcel being sent for binding Emerson and Ed. should be made payable to THE AMERICAN

The above offers are subject to the condition that orders for binding must be received by May 31st, 1946. No further orders will be accepted for money lost through being enclosed in the parcel. You then receive, on the arrival of the parcel. One book of 1000 copies (with free post - package) together with FREE Reprint of the Portrait of the NATURAL COLOURS) of General D.WIGHT, R. DIXON, at runs to the volume, are given with each binding. Checks should be drawn to the order of Mr. E. H. E. on the volume. Readers are asked to send in their orders not later than May 31st, 1946.
Reich's Greatest River a Bulwark No Longer

EASTWARD OVER THE RHINE, ACROSS A 400-YARDS PONTOON BRIDGE, after the enemy had destroyed all the permanent bridges—except at Remagen—equipment for General Hodges' U.S. 1st Army streamed into the Reich. When not flooded the Rhine is from 200 to 1,500 ft. wide, the current 3 to 5 kts, and the depth normally 20 ft., when flooded 40 ft. It was announced on March 26, 1945, that Royal Marines were guarding the pontoons against Nazi saboteur-swimmers carrying explosives.

Photo: U.S. Office