

How Munda Was Taken

Flamethrowers Burn Japs Out of Forts

By GEORGE JONES
Special to The Vancouver Sun
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WITH THE AMERICAN FORCE OUTSIDE MUNDA AIRFIELD, Aug. 2.—(Delayed.)—American flamethrowers, hurling great streams of fire on Japanese pillboxes inaccessible to artillery and tanks, hastened the advance toward Munda Airfield and seared the morale of the stubborn defenders.

For a number of reasons, flamethrowers were not used in the first three weeks of the New Georgia campaign. The American invasion forces depended instead upon artillery and dive-bombers and, in closing operations, upon light tanks.

But these pillboxes are tough. They withstand anything but a direct hit, and there are places where it is not feasible to use tanks.

Using these flamethrowers in the jungles is a tricky job. The chemical containers must be hauled through the dense growth to within 50 feet or less of the well-screened pillboxes.

WORK SEPARATELY

"Sometimes we didn't know the exact location of the pillboxes," said Lt. James Olds of Des Moines, Ia. "The infantry would guide us to their approximate location. It was rather nerve-racking trying to decide which bush hid the Nips. Sometimes the Nips would answer this question by opening up with their machine-guns. Then we lost no time in scorching them."

Protected only by the fire of riflemen, the flamethrowers work on each pillbox separately. Usually two men are assigned to each fortification, approaching it from divergent angles.

Almost always they are under fire of Japanese guns when they open the nozzles and pour two streams of fire and fumes into the pillbox apertures.

This is too much even for pillboxes that have stood up under days of bombardment by artillery and planes.

Sometimes the Japs fire a few rounds when the flames hit them, but this doesn't last long. In a matter of seconds, the Japs—if they are still alive—tumble from the pillboxes in a hurry, screaming and yelling. Sometimes they take their rifles with them. Usually they come out unarmed.

HARDLY SCORCHED

"Anyway," Olds said, "they're like sitting ducks for our riflemen, who pick them off as they emerge."

I have seen the bodies of several Japanese who evidently were killed in this fashion. Some were hardly scorched.

The effect of the flame on the stoutest pillbox is equally salutary. If the coconut logs are dry, they will burn to a crisp and the entire structure collapses into a heap of coral and ashes.

Flamethrowers are credited with the destruction of 30 pillboxes in five days—a 100 per cent average. Their use in this battle for Munda was the most extensive in jungle warfare and the South Pacific area so far.

B.C. MAN IN AFRICA



SGT. JACK FOS

Clayburn, B.C., RCAF navigator with an RAF Wellington squadron in North Africa, who finds a link with the Canadian prairies, where he took his flying training in the flat plains of Tunisia. Jack hasn't much to say about his operational trips, but he has been on trips to the unhappy isles of the Axis in the Mediterranean.

Church Group Raps Sale of Jap Property

OTTAWA, Aug. 7.—(CP)—The Rideau summer conference, an undenominational meeting on social problems held last week at Merrickville, Ont., United Church, in findings made public today criticized the sale by the government of property owned by Japanese of Canadian birth.

The report said: "This conference deplors the action of the responsible authorities who have seized and sold the property of Japanese of Canadian birth without their consent.

"This action is un-Canadian and restitution should be made.

"The placing of these Canadian Japanese in internment areas without providing educational facilities for their children is condemned, especially when educational advantages were made available to enemy aliens in Canadian universities."

Still Brings \$100 Fine

TRAIL, Aug. 7.—(CP)—C. W. Sharp was fined \$100 and costs Friday on a charge of having in his possession a still without lawful excuse and without a license under the Excise Act.

By-Elections Monday Have Importance

By Associated Press

OTTAWA, Aug. 7.—House of Commons representation in four ridings will be settled Monday when voting takes place in the Quebec constituencies of Montreal-Cartier and Stanstead, in Selkirk, Man., and in Humboldt, Sask.

All the ridings were formerly held by members of the Liberal party, which is fighting to hold them against CCF candidates and against a number of others who raise the total of candidates to 13.

IMPORTANT TEST

The Progressive-Conservative party is not offering candidates in any of the ridings.

The by-elections will provide a test of federal electoral sentiment in two widely separated but strategic centres of the Dominion and the campaigns have aroused much interest, particularly in view of the results of Wednesday's voting in the Ontario provincial elections.

Cartier, which has been represented by members of the Jewish Faith since 1917, will continue that tradition if it returns Lazarus Phillips, the official Liberal candidate. He has four opponents—David Lewis, CCF, youthful secretary of that party's national committee; Fred Rose, Labor-Progressive; Paul Masse, Bloc Populaire; and Moses Miller, Independent.

PRAISE CONTEST

In Stanstead, the vacancy was caused through the unseating of the Liberal member, R. G. Davidson, by a Supreme Court decision that his election in 1940 had involved activities by his workers which violated the Elections Act.

Mr. Davidson is the official Liberal candidate. He is opposed by Pierre Thomas of Magog, CCF, and Armand Choquette, Bloc Populaire.

Three candidates seek the Humboldt seat, two of them members of the Saskatchewan Legislature—Frank S. Krenn of Bruno, Liberal, and Joseph W. Burton of Humboldt, CCF. The third candidate is Theodore Langden Hoff, Social Credit.

A three-way battle in Selkirk is being fought by C. E. Fillmore, Liberal, William Bryce, CCF, and Miss Salome Hallderson, Social Credit.

Mrs. M. R. Malcolm Dies at Victoria

VICTORIA, Aug. 7.—(CP)—Mrs. Mary Ross Malcolm, daughter of the late Roderick Ross, Hudson's Bay Company factor at Norway House, Man., has died here. Mrs. Malcolm had been associated with the B. C. Coast Service of the C.P.R. for about 20 years as stewardess. Besides her husband, A. G. Malcolm of Victoria, she leaves two daughters, Mrs. Vernon Hughes, Powell River; Mrs. E. H. Carey, Victoria; three sons, Colin R., Vancouver; Alexander G. and Ian R., Victoria.

Accused Given Chance to Work

Andrew MacDonald, no fixed address, told Magistrate H. S. Wood in police court today that he "hadn't time to go to work," when he appeared on a charge of stealing a machine hammer from McLennan, McFeely & Prior, 69 East Cordova, on Thursday.

"How haven't you had time?" asked the magistrate.

He said he had just got out of jail two days ago after serving three months on a theft charge.

"I wonder if you would go to work?" Inquired the magistrate as he scanned the accused's record, which wasn't very satisfactory.

Raincoats

— and —

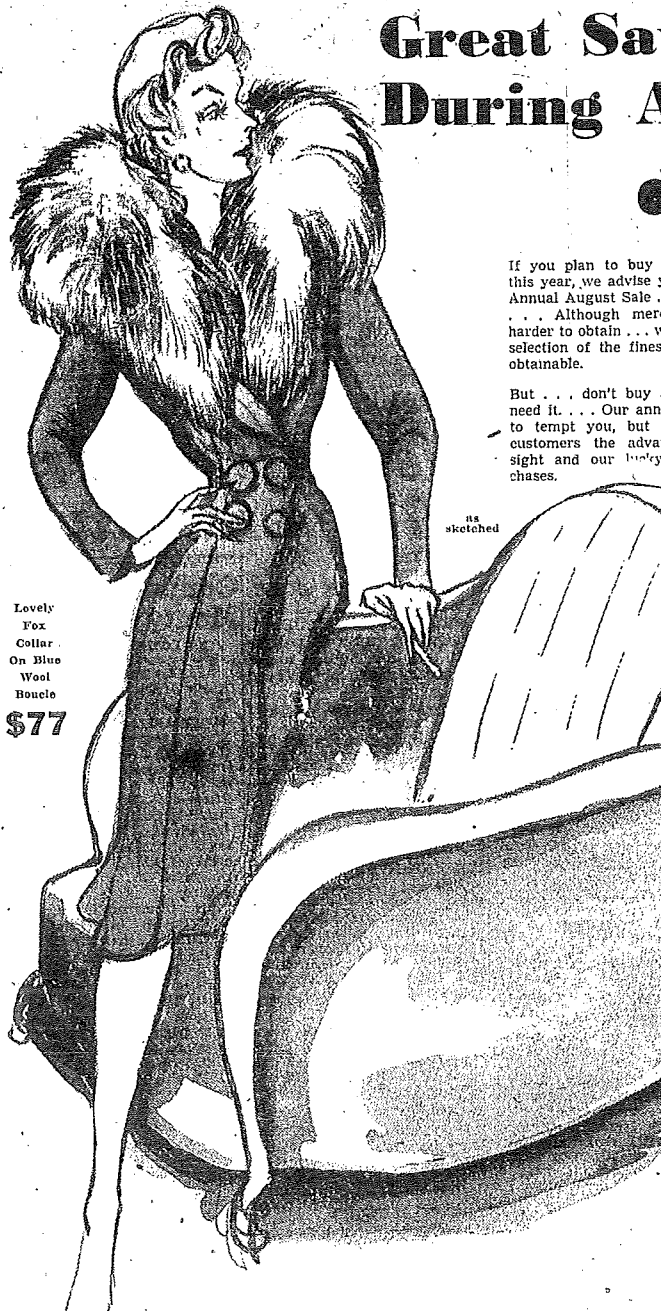
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