

short time to train French tank troops in the use of the new machines. Some training was started last February with what little could be spared from the equipment so sorely needed by the Yanks or the British.

Some of the equipment we were able to give the French found its way to the front. One outfit was given a battery of four anti-aircraft guns. Two days later the outfit left Algiers. Three days later at the French headquarters in Tunisia the battery's first shots brought down a German plane.

Quickly Learn Their Guns.
Another gun battery at Gafsa was supplied with American 105 millimeter guns. The gunners practiced for one day and then on a test, while the American commanding general was there, registered perfectly on a selected target.

The French are fairly familiar with every type of weapon they will get under the rehabilitation program. The only exception is the tank destroyers which never were used by the French army.

At Gafsa during the recent El Guetar fighting one French unit got a chance to work out with a lot of our 75 millimeter self-propelled guns. They found it easy to adapt themselves to it. The French already have our newest anti-tank gun which will replace the 37 millimeter gun.

Held Lines Thru Winter.

So you have this new picture of the modern French army. All thru the winter, while such French irregulars as the Tirailleurs, the Goums, and the Spahis, held the French lines against modernly equipped axis regiments, other first line French troops far in the rear were learning something about the new weapons America would send them when she could.

Plans were made then to convert the Spahis—the colorful blue-cloaked native cavalry—into mechanized reconnaissance teams such as the Americans have.

How those plans are bearing fruit for the French, who often said: "We have well trained soldiers here—an army of them. Why not send us arms immediately instead of spending time training Americans? We are an army eager to fight. Just give us arms."

R. A. F. BOMBERS RAID GERMANY, NORTH FRANCE

LONDON, April 20 (Tuesday)—(P)—British light bombers and fighters struck again last night at the creaking German transport system over a big stretch of occupied Europe and Germany.

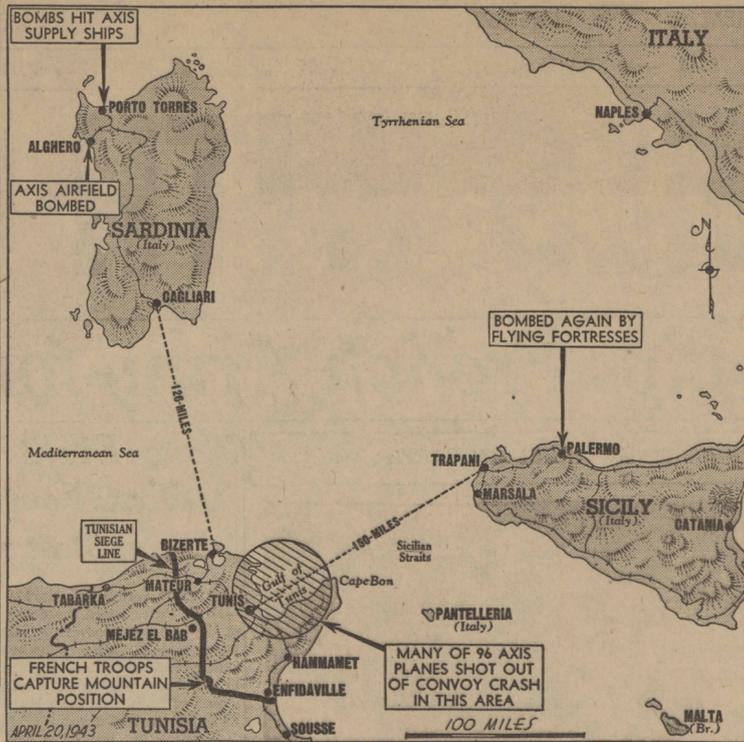
The air ministry news service said that the R. A. F.'s lighter ships ranged against Nazi rail lines and roads from Brittany thru northern France and Holland, and into northwestern Germany, and whirlwind bombers attacked shipping in the channel. [The Berlin radio said four enemy planes were shot down and that a fifth crashed in the channel.]

Flying across the Alps Sunday night, R. A. F. bombers raided the Italian fleet units huddled in the Spezia naval base on the northwest coast of Italy. Reconnaissance revealed that the greatest damage was in the dock area. Many buildings were damaged and large fires started. [The Rome radio said 8 persons were killed and 50 injured in the raid.]

A Reuters' report from Zurich, Switzerland, said 800 persons were killed in the R. A. F. raid on the Skoda armament works at Pilsen, in German occupied Czechoslovakia, Friday night.

Allies Hammer Axis Air Strength in Mediterranean

(Story in adjoining column.)



Captions tell developments reported yesterday from the Tunisian war areas.

'HOTTEST' YANK SQUADRON LED BY CHICAGOAN

Bags 4 1/2 Axis Planes in 10 Weeks.

BY SEYMOUR KORMAN.

[Chicago Tribune Press Service.] AT AN AMERICAN SPITFIRE BASE IN TUNISIA, April 18 (Delayed).—The "hottest" allied fighter squadron in Africa right now is one composed of Americans flying British Spitfires and commanded by Capt. George V. Williams Jr., 23 years old, 4700 Kenwood avenue, Chicago.

Williams and his men in 10 weeks' operations have amassed a total of 4 1/2 enemy planes destroyed—the fraction representing their share in one Nazi craft which was shot down by this squadron and two others.

And today the sturdy, dark haired captain told The Tribune correspondent more details. He scored his first victory early this month in a particularly dangerous maneuver.

Cuts Into Foe's Tail.
"I was chasing a Junkers 88 over El Guetar, pouring plenty of fire at him when he began to slow down. I was going much faster and right on his tail I turned hard. In a back-sweep my propeller slashed into his tail, cutting most of it off. He went down fast—a goner. My cockpit was filled with smoke and my motor

In Air Adventures

(Story in adjoining column.)



Captains John R. De Lapp (left) and George V. Williams Jr.

was partly disabled. I made a crash landing and came away from it okay."

Four days later Williams and his squadron in another sweep over El Guetar ran into 20 Junkers 87s (Stukas) escorted by 14 fighters. The American flyers gave battle and downed four Stuka dive bombers. One of these Nazi planes fell to Williams' guns in a wild chase over the enemy lines.

"He kept running away, and I kept after him," Williams said. "Then I realized we were over his home field and some ack-ack (anti-aircraft fire) came up to meet me. I gave him another burst. He tried to land, but when he hit the ground he was just a flaming wreck."

Another Williams in Outfit. There is another Williams in this outfit—2d Lt. Warren Williams of Plymouth, Wis. He added a victory

to the squadron's proud total when he destroyed one Messerschmitt 109 at Faïd a month ago. The operations officer for the group is Maj. Ralph Keyes, of Roodhouse, Ill.

At a neighboring field is Capt. John R. De Lapp, 1712 Linden road, Homewood, Ill. Flying what he calls "a hell of a lot of airplane" on strafing missions against enemy ground concentrations, he has smashed up half a dozen trucks, two personnel carriers, two gun posts, and one light tank.

[Capt. Williams is a graduate of Hyde Park High school. He lived with his aunt, Mrs. C. E. Howard, and his mother, Mrs. Sophia Williams, at 1700 Kenwood avenue. He married Miss Kitty Touchberry of Florence, S. C., Feb. 28, 1942.]

CIVILIAN GOODS FOR AFRICA PUT AT 26 MILLIONS

Washington, D. C., April 19 (P).—E. R. Stettinius Jr., lend-lease administrator, announced today that in the first four months of allied occupation of North Africa the United States shipped 126,184 tons of food, clothing, and other civilian necessities, valued at 26 1/2 million dollars, to rehabilitate the local civilian population.

He said that by June 30 shipments will total approximately 50 million dollars, exclusive of aid being sent by the British. Flour, sugar, clothing, seed, and canned milk lead in present deliveries.

TOLL OF ROMMEL PLANES RISES TO 112 IN 48 HOURS

Allies Bag 70 Cargo and Troop Transports.

Report Naval Battle

LONDON, April 20 (Tuesday)—(P)—Axis reports reaching London thru Stockholm said early today that there was "violent fighting in the Sicilian straits" between British destroyers and axis warships escorting a convoy bound for Tunisia. The battle began when the British pounced on the convoy, and then made contact with the escorts, a report from the Berlin correspondent of the Nazi controlled Scandinavian telegram bureau said. The correspondent attributed his information to Rome. A London newspaper asserted the Italian fleet had put to sea, and that many warships, including three battleships, had fled from Spezia in northern Italy after the R. A. F. raid on that base on Sunday.

BULLETIN.

ALLIED HDQ. IN NORTH AFRICA, April 20 (Tuesday)—(P).—Twelve more giant axis aerial transports and eight other enemy planes were destroyed by Allied fighter planes yesterday off the Tunisian coast, it was announced today. This brought to 112 axis planes destroyed in 48 hours. The total included 70 Junkers-52 freighters and transports.

ALLIED HDQ. IN NORTH AFRICA, April 19 (P).—Blazing air attacks on the axis' vital air transport across the Sicily straits were continuing today after allied airmen had inflicted a major disaster on the enemy yesterday. In less than an day and a half 96 axis planes had been destroyed.

Yesterday 53 troop and cargo transports and 16 fighters were destroyed in the greatest single air victory of the war in this sector. Eleven axis aircraft were destroyed elsewhere (five during an axis night raid on Algiers) on the North African front, making a total of 85 for the day. Allied losses were seven planes.

Today up to 10 a. m. ten three motor Junkers 52 transports and one Messerschmitt 109 had been shot down.

Heavy Toll of Transports.

Thus 68 axis transports and 28 other planes have been destroyed. In the last two weeks 159 of the huge JU 52s have been destroyed.

Only over England has the German air force ever taken a worse beating. At the climax of the battle of Britain the R. A. F. shot down 99 Nazi planes on Sept. 9, 1940; 185 German raiders on Sept. 28.

American, R. A. F., and South African pilot, patrolling the Sicilian straits late yesterday afternoon sighted more than 100 axis transports, with strong fighter protection, flying toward Sicily almost at water level. Warhawk [P-40]

ALLIED FLYERS RAID FIVE JAP BASES IN SOUTHWEST PACIFIC

ALLIED HDQ. IN AUSTRALIA, April 20 (Tuesday) (P).—Allied bombers started fires in attacks on Koepang and Finschhafen yesterday, the high command reported today. Koepang is at the southwest tip of Dutch Timor. Finschhafen is on the Huon peninsula of New Guinea, 60 miles from Lae.

Five enemy airdromes in New Britain and New Guinea were lightly raided by the allies, the communique reported. They included those at Hollandia, Dutch New Guinea, Cape Gloucester, and Gasmata, New Britain.

A small enemy coastal vessel was attacked in the Tanimbar Islands. Medium bombers bombed and strafed the building area at Wald bay, New Guinea, in a night attack.

squadrons dived into the lumbering JU 52s while Spitfires took on the protecting Messerschmitts.

Damage 30 Other Planes.

In a matter of minutes the transports were falling wreathed in flames. Most of them crashed on land near Cape Bon, 50 miles north-east of Tunis, sending up great columns of black smoke and strewing the countryside with wreckage. Others of the transports, each of which can carry from 16 to 20 soldiers, fell into the sea.

Pilots of some of the transports which escaped the first assault from the Warhawks were reported to have made crash landings on the Tunisian beaches, only to have allied fighters hunt them down and blast them into wreckage. In addition to the planes destroyed, another 30 were damaged.

[Military spokesmen in Cairo, said the transports were loaded with troops and added that the battle was almost entirely an American victory, altho British planes provided top cover. London military sources suggested that Marshal Rommel might be using air transport to bring fresh troops from Sicily and on the return trip carry his wounded and partially incapacitated men.]

Forts Bomb Palermo.

American Flying Fortresses gave Palermo, Sicily, its third bombardment in three days, concentrating on the railroad yards or the port choked with military supplies. Warehouses were set afire. Another Fortress formation attacked nearby Boca de Falco air field.

Mitchell medium bombers raided the Alghero-Pertilla air field on Sardinia, hitting a gasoline dump and dropping bombs among 40 to 50 dispersed bombers and transports.

Limited ground fighting in Tunisia saw French forces capture the Rag el Hedji, a mountain position 40 miles west of Enfidaville, coastal anchor of Marshal Rommel's 140 mile defense line.

ADMIT GREAT DAMAGE.

Great damage was caused in an aerial bombardment of the Sicilian port of Palermo by American bombers, the Italian high command reported in a broadcast.

Nine raiding planes were reported destroyed over Palermo, Catania, Ragusa, and Marsala.

The Italian communique said that in Tunisia there was more intense fighting activity.

FINDS RATIONING IS WEAKENED BY REGIONAL TASTE

Institute Says British Plan Is Not Suitable to U. S.

Inflexibility in food rationing, which does not take into consideration variances in American food consumption, may work unnecessary consumer hardships, the American Institute of Food Distribution, Inc., New York, said yesterday.

The institute asserts it is illogical to adopt a food ration program which has succeeded in Great Britain and expect it to succeed here because of the differences in size and population of the two countries.

Within the United States great land distances and varying climatic conditions, inherited national tastes and the economic factor create great variances in food consumption, it states.

Sections' Food Habits.

Estimates of per capita consumption of different kinds and amounts of food, based on population figures, do not show the true food situation, the institute says, because different types of foods are preferred in different sections of the country.

For example, midwesterners are more likely to prefer steaks than New Yorkers, who lean toward the "gourmet" foods, and Californians consume an "amazing" quantity of fresh fruits and vegetables.

"Despite great regional food consumption variations, when food rationing was started all Americans went to market with the same number of ration points to buy foods which bore the same ration point values in all parts of the country."

"Inflexible and cumbersome, that program has brought evasions by consumers and the trade."

Fears Breakdown.

Unless the worst trouble spots are ironed out, the food organization continues, lack of confidence will develop which may break down "with disastrous results to the population and the food trades in particular."

"An absolutely even distribution of supplies over the country will force heavy consuming areas to suffer from undersupply while light consumption areas will find supplies piling up," the institute says. "Under terms of either oversupply or undersupply, in terms of point buying power, black market conditions are bound to flourish."

BURGLES GET 26 WATCHES.
David Martin, 2929 Greenleaf avenue, reported a burglary of 26 watches valued at \$674, from his jewelry store at 238 South State street yesterday.

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