

4 Rangers Meet 2 Kentucky Heroes Again—Far, Far From Cabanatuan

Men Who Won Gentry Freedom And \$190 Visit

By MARION PORTER.

When a hero is a hero to other heroes he is a hero indeed.

Four of the Rangers who took part in the liberation of prisoners at Cabanatuan, 35 miles behind the Jap lines on Luzon, yesterday were the recipients of looks and words of boyish hero worship from two of the rescued Kentuckians, who were among the brave defenders of Bataan and Corregidor.

With wistful admiration members of the American Legion—no slouches themselves at being heroic in their time—gazed on the rescuers and the rescued, and perhaps thought nostalgically of their own war, a pretty good war though lacking in the same kind of dramatic incidents.

Evansvillian In Quartet.

The Rangers, here to address rallies at war plants, were lunching guests of the Jefferson County Council of the American Legion at the Kentucky Hotel. They were Pfc. Charles S. Swain, 23, Beaver Dam, Wis.; Pfc. Leroy Meyerhoff, 28, Evansville, Ind.; S/Sgt. Charles W. Brown, 29, Chicago Heights, Ill., and 1st Sgt. Robert C. Anderson, 28, Trenton, Tenn., a nephew of John O. Anderson, 211 Pleasant View.

Breaking hard rolls and eating chicken a la king with them at the speakers' table—only two months after they had made that hazardous but joyous march together back from Cabanatuan to the American lines—were Capt. William Gentry, Harrodsburg, and Delbert L. Sparks, a machinist's mate in the Navy, of 220 W. Burnett.

Anderson Had 'Close Shave.'

Capt. Thomas E. Bogardus, Milwaukee, who together with Maj. Lawrence A. Herron, industrial service officer of the Fifth Service Command, was in charge of the group, gave statistics on the mission before the Rangers told their individual stories. He



1ST SGT. R. G. ANDERSON
"—saw first prisoner come out."

said that 121 Rangers were picked for the mission, but were told they could back out "without any reflection on yourselves." The raid was completed in 28 minutes, with 511 prisoners rescued without a single casualty and 523 Japs killed. The raiders carried no packs, wore no helmets and had a one-day supply of K-rations to give the prisoners on arrival—they themselves depending on Filipinos for food and shelter en route.

Of the four Rangers here probably Anderson came closest to "getting it."

Brown Resists Temptation.

First sergeant of the company sent on the mission, Anderson was one of those assigned to getting prisoners out of the stockade. He had helped a crippled prisoner across the road when a mortar shell burst close to him, killing the medical officer and wounding two other Rangers. He recalled "meeting" Sparks when the shell burst. Sparks was one of the prisoners close by.

Sergeant Brown told of the half-mile crawl and going to the rear of the stockades where the Jap garrisons were and what a temptation it was to shoot the five Japs outside the fence. But there was no firing until each group was in position.

"We got those five Japs shortly



S/SGT. CHARLES W. BROWN
"—never heard sweeter music."

and the 70 Japs in the bamboo shacks," he said.

Private Swain was in the group assigned to attack the main gates. The Yank who was to open the gate found it locked, and when he threw his weight against it he bounced back in to the road, dropping his tommy gun. He drew his pistol but it was shot out of his hand by a Jap. He recovered it, killed the Jap, shot the lock off and yelled: "Come on in, boys!"

Meyerhoff's job was to get through the main gate and cut the wire around the prisoners' stockade "as soon as we were sure the Japs were dead." And he matter-of-factly outlined this feat.

He said that Jap reinforcements were on their way, but the Filipinos set up a road blockade "and those sons of Heaven were sure stopped, stacked up four deep on the highway."

Gentry Wins "Freedom Pool."

"I am eternally grateful to the Rangers," said Captain Gentry. "And it wasn't luck, but pure science, that was responsible for the success of the mission. It was a miracle, though—and the movies will never be able to duplicate it."

He said he was in a ditch during the firing and he saw American soldiers at the gate—but thought they were prisoners leav-

ing. He went to join them and a Ranger thrust a .45 into his hand and said, "Come on, buddy, we'll lead the parade."

Treatment Is 'Censored.'

Captain Gentry said 20 minutes before the Rangers came he was ready to sell his chance in a pool the officers got up on the time they would be rescued.

"But when the Rangers came I won \$190—not to mention my freedom," he added.

Sparks told how the Japs had tried to make a group of soldiers talk. The soldiers had stolen some onions and the Japs tried to make them tell where they got them. The Japs stuck bamboo sticks under their fingernails and set fire to them. He also described a beating he saw a 9-year-old Filipino boy receive because he had stolen a piece of scrap material "about the size of a \$1 bill" to patch his pants.

A member of one audience asked about the general treatment of the prisoners by the Japs. Captain Gentry arose, but before he spoke Major Herron said: "We had rather not answer that—all those things haven't been cleared yet. The treatment in one camp is different from that in others. Some things have been exaggerated and some have been underplayed—a lot of things will come out later."

Itinerary Mapped Out.

After the luncheon the Rangers said they were impressed "with the work the war plants are putting out."

"But on the street you get the idea the people don't know there is a war," said Swain.

"It surprised me to see so many women in the war plants," said Meyerhoff.

"We had been told how everything is rationed—we don't think it's so bad—I sure get steaks everywhere," said Brown.

Yesterday the Rangers went to Reynolds Research Corporation, who were hosts at a dinner at the Kentucky Hotel last night for the group—to Curtis-Wright, Murphy Elevator Company and American Elevator & Machine Company. Today they will visit the Louisville Tool & Die Company, Tube Turns Plants 1 and 2, Reynolds Metals Company Plants 1, 7, 8 and 9, and tomorrow the American Air Filter Company, Henry Vogt Machine Company, and Sunfire Stoker Company, New Albany.



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